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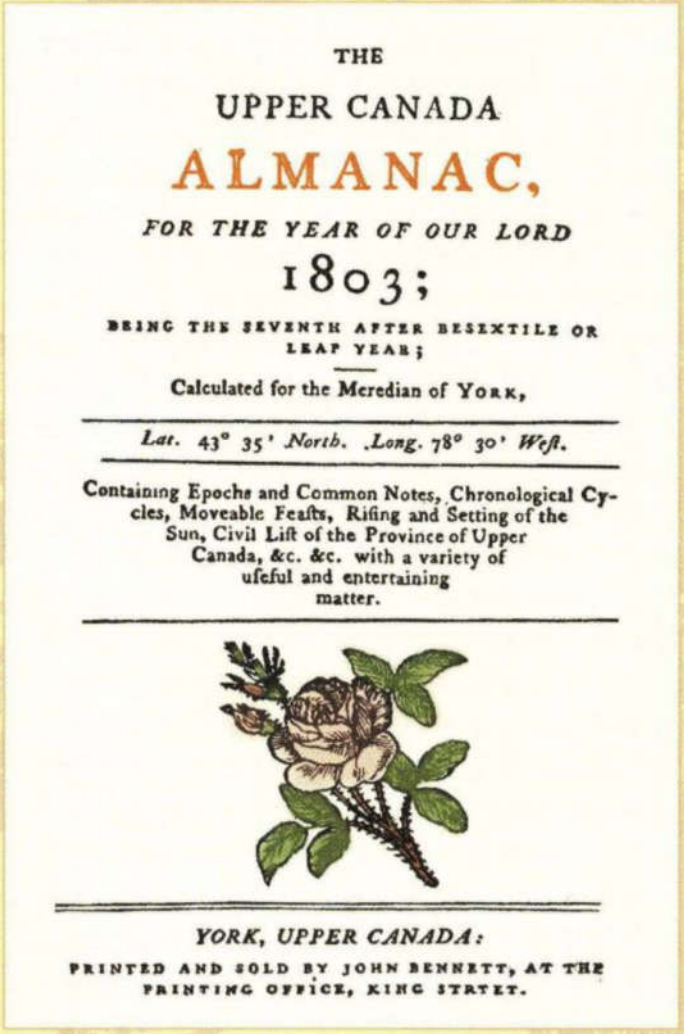

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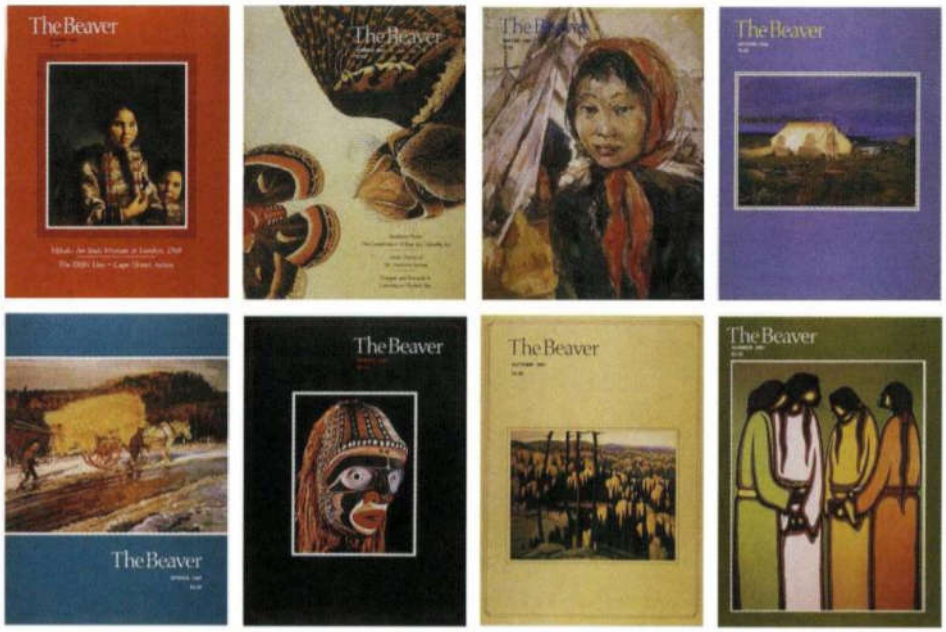

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Exploring Canada's History

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Christopher Dafoe

Exploring Canada's History

A shock-wave swept over the nation recently when it was revealed that a poll conducted by the Angus Reid organization indicated that many young Canadians lack an elementary knowledge of Canadian history.

"Canucks flunk history" said one newspaper headline. Educational experts and commentators across the country vigorously deplored the failure of a hefty proportion of the 1,104 young Canadians polled to successfully answer "basic" questions such as the date of Confederation, the name of the first francophone Prime Minister, the year in which Canadian women first voted in a federal election and the name of the first Canadian in space.

Surveys of this sort are frequently attempted, of course. In January of this year we read in the *Globe and Mail* that university students in Ontario had scored dismally in a basic Canadian history test, failing to recall the names of important prime ministers, mixing up Louis Riel and René Lévesque and failing to link the date 1867 to a significant event in the rise of our nation.

The results of these surveys and tests are always depressing, especially when the ill-informed turn out to be university students or recent high school graduates. It is even more distressing to learn that many young people seem to know more about the history of other lands, especially the United States, than they do of their own. Blame is attached to schools and school teachers and there is often a suggestion that things were better in the past when any Canadian youth could readily name the significant prime ministers, identify the Fathers of Confederation by name, provide the dates for the battles of the Plains of Abraham, Lundy's Lane, Batoche and Vimy and sing all verses of *The Maple Leaf Forever* from memory.

There was probably never a time when the schools of Canada turned out vast numbers of widely-informed Canadian history scholars, let alone a respectable quorum of those steeped in the "basic facts" of Canadian history. Our educational system has traditionally let us down in the teaching of Canadian history, sending generations of students out into the world with, at best, a vague idea of what events and forces shaped the destiny of the Canadian nation. As many provincial departments of education continue to shift attention away from the humanities, the educational shortfall will become worse.

The problem, in fact, is probably even worse than it appears. The sensational stories that appear in the newspapers and on television – "Canucks flunk history" – always seem to be about the failure of a majority of those polled or tested to answer a dozen or so "basic" questions. The tendency here is to reduce Canadian history to a specialized version of the "Trivial Pursuit" board-game or a "Reach for the Top" quiz. The implication appears to be that we would all be better Canadians if we could recall, as soon as asked, that Wilfrid Laurier was the first francophone Prime Minister, that Marc Garneau was the first Canadian in space or that Confederation took place in 1867. These facts are worth knowing, to be sure, but there is much more to Canadian history and history in general than "facts" and dates, which can always be verified with the aid of library texts. Real history, the history we ought to know something about, is often difficult, frequently complex and always subject to interpretation. The "big picture" is made up of many small pictures, the great themes have many sub-themes that often overlap and merge. To understand the history of a nation, 10 facts and dates or even 100 are not sufficient.

Why do we study history? One Canadian historian, when asked that question, replied that we study history because it is interesting and because, knowing history, we might be able to make the future better than the past. Others might say that we study history in order to better understand human beings, to better understand ourselves.

For Canadians who fear the breakup of our country a knowledge of history alone may not be the whole way of saving the nation, but a knowledge of history could help us better understand the country we wish to preserve in all its variety and complexity. A knowledge of our past helps give the country substance and identity, to make it seem real.

For people who do not pay attention to the history of home, all history is something that happened somewhere else far away and to someone else.

Those of us who see value in a knowledge of history and who get pleasure from the things in history that are interesting to us wonder if other people, especially young people, can be induced to see the value, importance and interest of Canadian history. Can large numbers of people be convinced that history is worth knowing about? It would be nice to ignite a prairie fire of enthusiasm for Canadian history among the young, but a realistic view of the matter makes it clear that, as always, those who find it interesting will be interested while others will nod off or leave the room. Canadian history is not unique in its power to bore some people all of the time. Some parts of Canadian history are unpleasant. One often encounters disagreeable facts that must be faced. Some of it is replete with *longueurs* that must be endured until the interesting parts begin again. Perhaps history is best appreciated in all its variety at a more advanced, contemplative stage of life.

Nevertheless, many Canadians of all ages are interested in all or many aspects of the history of this country and many more would be interested if

some means could be found of drawing their attention to it. An interest in history often begins in childhood and an appetite for history might be fostered early in life by introducing children to the history of the district, town or city in which they live. How did people live in this place 100 years ago? What was life like for children a century back?

Canada's National History Society was founded to promote interest in and knowledge of Canadian history and it has a number of ways of doing so, from encouraging the teaching of history to the publication of this magazine.

The Beaver, for many years, was a Hudson's Bay Company project and concentrated on the North, Company history and the fur trade. In 1985 it was decided that *The Beaver* would become a magazine of Canadian history, dealing with the past of the whole country. At the time, many wondered if the magazine would survive the change of subject matter. Would circulation sag?

In 1985 the magazine had fewer than 15,000 paid-up subscribers, combined with an extensive free-list of HBC employees, shareholders, etc.

It soon became clear that there *was* an audience for Canadian history. While the free-list was virtually eliminated, the paid subscriptions rose steadily. Today the magazine has over 40,000 paid-up subscribers and has hopes of getting more.

We have attempted to keep the magazine and its history interesting and alive by covering a wide variety of topics, the entire range of the Canadian experience and all parts of the country. Articles have come to us in a variety of ways. Historians frequently call to say that, in the course of research, an interesting story or set of papers has come to light that could form the basis of a fascinating article.

On other occasions we approach leading historians to produce an article on a specific topic, as we did for our 75th anniversary issue in 1995 in which we covered various aspects of "Canada's twentieth century". Articles have also been specifically commissioned for various occasions. In 1992, the year of the Christopher Columbus celebrations, for example, we passed on Columbus, who never saw Canada, and asked Robert McGhee to write instead about pre-Columbian visitors to the New World. When the country was debating the constitution and the issues of Confederation, we published articles that provided an historical background to the debates.

Variety is also found in the weight and emphasis given to different subjects. Every article need not deal with a powerful and highly significant topic. Pleasure, instruction and curious knowledge can also be found in stories about obscure but interesting lives, fascinating byways of history and unusual and entertaining events of past times. Every reader is not expected to appreciate every article equally, but often a reader who picks up the magazine in order to read an informed study of some political struggle of the past has stayed seated to read about a memorable hockey team in the 1920s or a determined woman who changed the course of medical history. Canadian history is full of these unexpected pleasures and it is our task to bring them to our readers.

Why do people subscribe to *The Beaver* and why are they attracted to Canadian history? Many, no doubt, like reading the magazine because they like a good story; they find Canadian history surprisingly interesting and more various than they had imagined. They like stories about people, great and obscure, and their accomplishments and adventures. They like the story-telling aspects of history.

Others wish to be informed on the great trends and events in Canadian history, the political and social struggles that shaped and are shaping the nation. Still others wish to be made aware of new interpretations of the events of the Canadian past and they are happy that important Canadian historians such as P.B. Waite and Ramsay Cook are willing to share their work with a general audience in *The Beaver*.

Readership surveys have told us that while all age groups, from teenagers to the elderly, are represented on *The Beaver*'s subscription list, the average reader (if there is such a being) tends to be in the older group. When the publishers first heard this news after a survey in 1980 there was a general feeling of alarm. The average reader was getting older by the day! Would the readership eventually just die out? Was *The Beaver* doomed?

It did not happen, of course, and the subscription list got longer year by year. Obviously new recruits were filling and expanding the ranks. By keeping the magazine interesting, by maintaining high standards and by never making the mistake of "talking down" to its readers, *The Beaver*, after 75 years and more, might hope to continue playing an important and worthy part in the unfolding discovery of Canada by its citizens. And the best may be yet to come as the Boomers move up to swell the ranks. ◆

Any answers?

- *Who was Canada's first Prime Minister?*
- *In what year were all Canadian women eligible to vote in federal elections? Was it 1888, 1921 or 1942?*
- *Which province was the last one to join Canada?*
- *Who was Canada's first francophone Prime Minister?*
- *What is the name of the Métis leader who was hanged by the federal government in 1885?*
- *What year did Confederation occur?*
- *Who was the first Canadian in space?*
- *What is the name commonly given to the political and social movement that swept Quebec society in the beginning of the 1960s?*
- *The members of which ethnic group were once forced to pay a head tax to immigrate to Canada?*

The Secrets of Halifax Harbour

By David Napier

Into the mist my guardian prows put forth,
Behind the mist my virgin ramparts lie;
The Warden of the Honour of the North,
Sleepless and veiled am I!

– Rudyard Kipling,
"The Song of the Cities: Halifax"

On the morning of 24 December 1944, a grey sky loomed over the frigid waters of Halifax Harbour. With the Second World War at full intensity the port city was busily preserving her reputation as "Warden of the North" as Convoy XB 139 began to assemble in the approaches to the harbour. A dozen merchant vessels and a handful of escorts were preparing to make the "Triangle Run" – as the route between St. John's, Halifax, Boston and New York had been dubbed – including the HMCS *Clayoquot*, a Bangor-class minesweeper with an 81-man crew.

The *Clayoquot* had been ordered to leave her sweeping gear ashore and devote herself entirely to escort duties. Acutely aware that the greatest threat came from stealthy German U-boats that lurked in Canadian coastal waters and had been wreaking havoc on Allied shipping, Lieutenant-Commander Craig Campbell of Vancouver ordered the *Clayoquot* on a zig-zag sweeping pattern, which would be altered every two minutes to guard against attack. At 10:40 A.M. it began its manoeuvres by shifting away from the convoy and toward the shore. This move put it on a direct course with an undetected German submarine, U-806, which lay silently below the surface monitoring activity in the outer harbour.

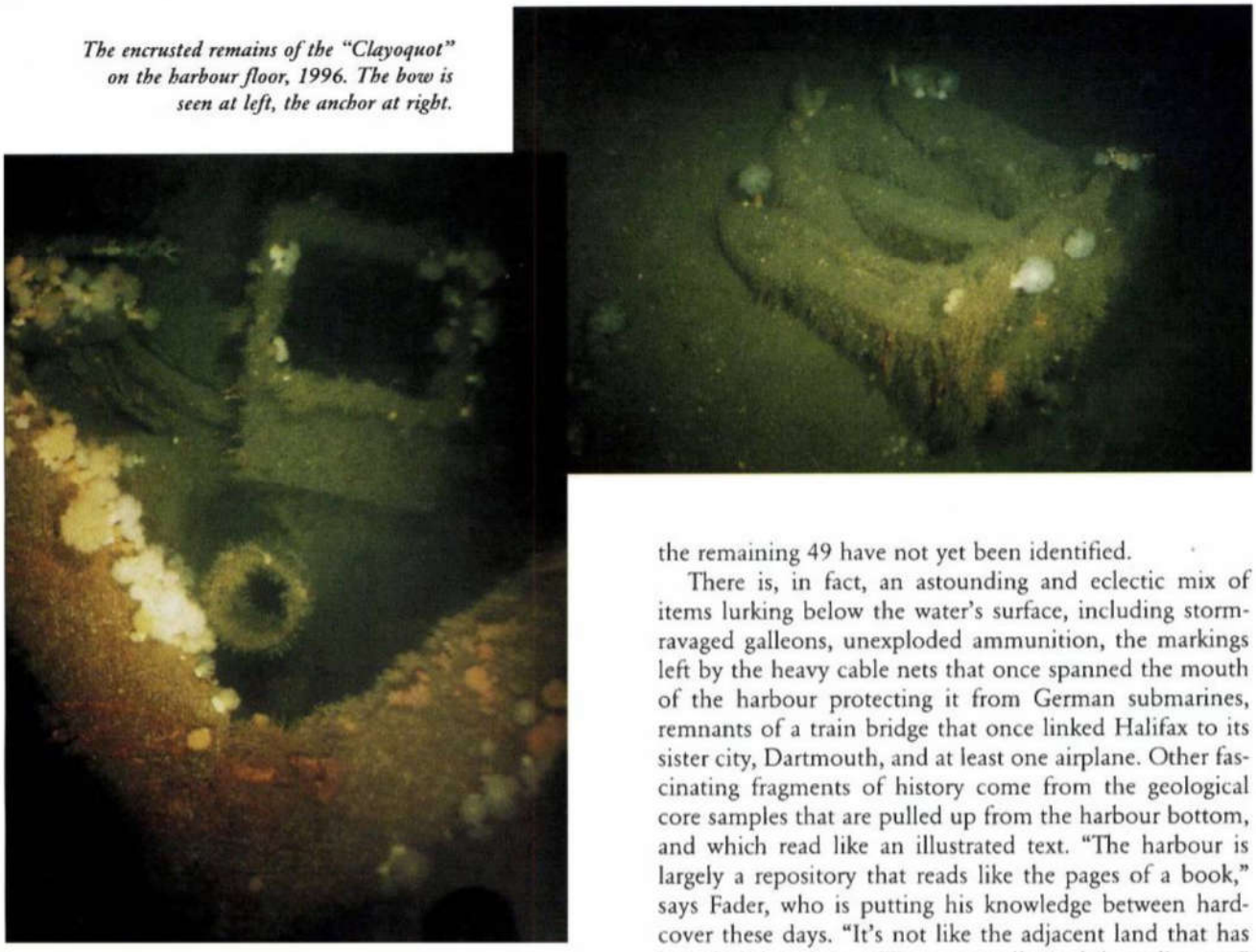
When the *Clayoquot* made its unexpected turn, U-boat commander Klaus Hornbostel feared he had been spotted and fired a Gnat acoustic torpedo. As U-806 dropped 50 metres to avoid the danger that the warhead would home back onto the submarine, the torpedo sliced through the water, tracking onto the minesweeper's propeller. Leaving no wake of bubbles on the surface, the silver cylinder reached its destination in seconds and detonated 250 kilograms of high explosives under the stern of the *Clayoquot*. The hit rocked Stoker Petty Officer Ernie White from his hammock, sending him and 72 others scrambling for lifevests and eventually the icy Atlantic.

Fifty-two years after his narrow escape, White sits in a Halifax doughnut shop clutching a steaming mug of coffee between beefy fingers as he relives the terrifying moment when the *Clayoquot* listed heavily to the starboard and the order to abandon ship was given. He plunged overboard and clutched the side of a lifeboat, then watched as eight fellow seamen went down with the ship. White recalls the image of one officer trapped below deck sticking his head out the portholes, yelling for an axe with which to hack his way free. Help never came. At that point all the axes were under water and the *Clayoquot* was clearly destined for the bottom. "They were trapped," says an emotional White. "They were alive."

The 76-year-old sailor recently brought this sad event to a close when the *Clayoquot* was identified during efforts on the part of the Geological Survey of Canada to map the harbour floor. Marine geologist Gordon Fader uses high-tech equipment to generate underwater images, one of which showed "a

National Archives of Canada

"View of Halifax from Georges Island", circa 1801, by George Isham Parkyns.



The encrusted remains of the "Clayoquot" on the harbour floor, 1996. The bow is seen at left, the anchor at right.

steep angled bow, deck gun and bridge structure with a badly broken stern". Archival records confirmed that Fader had likely discovered a significant piece of history, which has now been positively identified as HMCS *Clayoquot*.

In September of 1996 it came time to dive on the wreck and Stoker Petty Officer (Ret'd) White was invited to journey back in time. He couldn't resist the offer to fold his 6'2", 200-plus pound frame into a tiny Navy submersible, the SDL-1 (Submersible Diver Lockout) from the mothership HMCS *Cormorant*, and go along for the ride. After much searching Fader found his needle in the haystack ("It was more like looking for a particular piece of hay in a haystack" he says) covered in barnacles and "rusticles", and looking not unlike the *Titanic*.

"It was an emotional thing," says White, who calls it "a chapter in the book that wasn't completed, but is now."

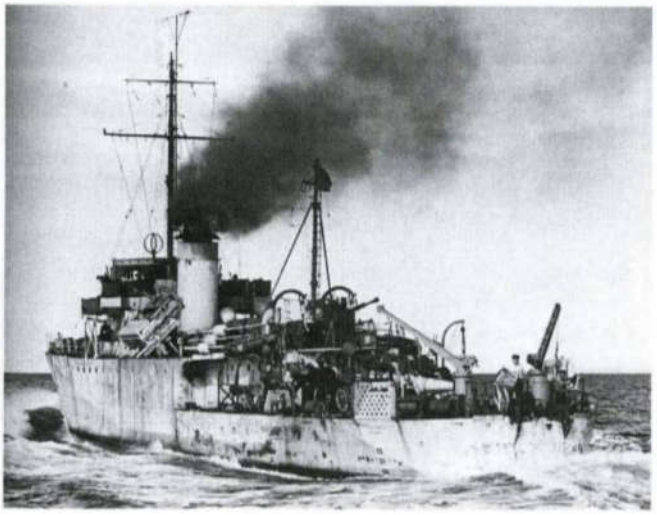
The *Clayoquot* is just one of many military vessels that Fader and geological technician Bob Miller have discovered since 1988 using sidescan sonar and a new multibeam bathymetric system (operated by the Canadian Hydrographic Service). The two-man team recently made a sizable addition to its list when 52 magnetic "anomalies" were identified off the harbour. Three of these have turned out to be sunken vessels, one of which was the *Clayoquot*; the remaining 49 have not yet been identified.

There is, in fact, an astounding and eclectic mix of items lurking below the water's surface, including storm-ravaged galleons, unexploded ammunition, the markings left by the heavy cable nets that once spanned the mouth of the harbour protecting it from German submarines, remnants of a train bridge that once linked Halifax to its sister city, Dartmouth, and at least one airplane. Other fascinating fragments of history come from the geological core samples that are pulled up from the harbour bottom, and which read like an illustrated text. "The harbour is largely a repository that reads like the pages of a book," says Fader, who is putting his knowledge between hard-cover these days. "It's not like the adjacent land that has been bulldozed over. We can actually read the sediments."

It is a long, rich story, spanning from pre-history through the time when settlers first arrived in the area and left traces of herbs and pollen, to the introduction of copper, coal, and the use of paints, plastics and even condoms. But perhaps most staggering is Fader's ability to identify fallout from nuclear atmospheric testing.

Most written histories of the area date back to 1604 when Samuel Champlain passed en route to Port Royal and took note of "the fine harbour" at the place that would become Halifax. The Frenchman's records mark the launch of an active port, especially for Europeans, but it was the local Micmac Indians who first inhabited the area, fishing and hunting in and around the harbour, then staging feasts on the nearby shores. The French arrived to stay in the late seventeenth century and used the area as a fishing station, drying their catches on McNab's Island. A portion of this island would come to be known as "Hangman's Beach", so-called for the corpses that would dangle in full view of passing ships as a reminder of what would happen to others who attempted mutiny.

Many of the vessels that have come into Halifax Harbour met with misfortune, but none so horrible as Duc d'Anville's fleet – the remnants of which Fader believes he may have located off the shores of the Bedford Basin inside Halifax Harbour.



Above: Men of the "Clayoquot" await rescue, 24 December 1944.

Below: The "Clayoquot" on patrol, 1944.

To understand the significance of this "find" one must go back to the year 1746. At that time, the French captain Duc d'Anville was expecting to receive orders to sail for Scotland to support the forces of Bonnie Prince Charlie, which would soon engage in battle at Culloden. His instructions, however, were to make for "Chebucto" (later known as Halifax) and rendezvous with a French squadron from the West Indies. Together they would chart a course along the coast of Nova Scotia to its northern tip where they were to recover Fortress Louisbourg, which had been captured the year before by American militiamen.

The crossing for d'Anville and his fleet was a disaster, made hellish by storms and the ravages of typhus which afflicted great numbers of his men. Halifax historian, Lou Collins, says the great fleet was "reduced to a fragment of what d'Anville had set out with" when it hobbled into port. Expecting to find supply ships and other sailors there to meet him, d'Anville was so far behind schedule that he was met by an anchorage that was empty except for the canoes of the Micmacs. Over 2,000 men died on this doomed expedition, over 1,000 of them at Chebucto.

If Fader has found the skeleton of d'Anville's ship, it could be one of the greatest discoveries in Canadian waters. The fact that it has not been verified does not detract from the discovery. In fact, it serves to fuel local interest. The history of the city is, after all, the history of the sea. "There are probably several hundred wrecks down in the Halifax Harbour dating right back to d'Anville's fleet which came here even before the city was founded [in 1749]," says Bob Ogilvie, a curator with the Nova Scotia Museum. "There's no question that there's a lot of history down there."

Fader's record for locating sunken "treasures" means the harbour is closely monitored – and not just by historians. Divers make a habit of watching his movements and following the news of discoveries, hoping to gain information that will lead them to a diver's paradise. Ogilvie estimates that there are 10 to 15 shipwrecks in the harbour that are well-known and well-visited by divers, some who come from as far away as the U.S. "We have reports that divers from New Jersey consider this their new playground." Disgusted that history is disturbed when explorers turn into thieves, Ogilvie says that many "vultures are just looking for a trophy for the mantle."

Federal and provincial laws are vague about what can and cannot be done underwater. What is certain is that those divers who pilfer items (and not all do) are robbing graves, such as the site of the *Atlantic*, a large vessel that went down off Halifax in 1873, taking down more than half its 1,000 passengers.

The city's greatest nautical disaster came on 6 December 1917, when the French munitions ship *Mount Blanc* collided with the Belgian supply vessel *Imo*, sparking the largest man-made explosion seen to that date. The "Halifax Explosion" rocked the city, leaving almost 2,000 dead and many more injured. The power of the blast was so great that the anchor shank from the *Mount Blanc*, which weighed half a ton, was blown more than two miles across the city before finally coming to rest on the shores of the Northwest Arm.

Surprisingly, the explosion left few scars on the harbour floor, but did teach officials a valuable lesson that would help avert another munitions disaster. This incident occurred when the *Trongate*, a military cargo transport vessel laden with explosives, caught fire in the harbour in 1942 and threatened to cause a blast greater than the explosion of 1917. Faced with the prospect of another disaster, the Navy sank the *Trongate*. The ship was later cut into pieces and salvaged, but left the harbour floor littered with four-inch shells, cordite, leather boots and a massive depression on the harbour floor which serves as an eerie reminder of what could have been. ◆

David Napier is a Toronto freelance with Maritime connections.

Hostess to a Nation

Nellie King ruled Ottawa society and once helped rescue a tottering government

By R.B. Fleming

When Prime Minister Mackenzie King appointed Dr. James H. King to the Senate in June 1930, he called him "a loyal and trusted and deeply valued friend" who had accomplished a great deal for "those most in need of their country's aid."

"I cannot conclude this letter," the Prime Minister continued, "without making some mention of the great part which Mrs. King has played in all that has pertained to the social side of the life of the Ministry. Both you and she have been indefatigable in your efforts to do for others in a way which would be helpful alike to the Government and to the Party and on behalf of both I should like to express warmest appreciation to Mrs. King and to yourself."

During the first half of this century, Jim and Nellie King were known across the country. Dr. King was a cabinet minister in Victoria and Ottawa, and he had indeed helped the needy, both returned soldiers and old people. A quiet, sensitive man, he was the perfect foil for a gregarious and astute wife. Nellie King could not walk a block in Ottawa without being stopped by people wanting to talk to her. She was known as "Canada's Hostess" and in 1926 she even helped Mackenzie King save his government. When she died in 1949 one newspaper called her "one of the Dominion's most truly gracious women."

James King was born in Chipman, New Brunswick, in 1873. He attended St. Martin's Academy, east of Saint John, and studied medicine at McGill and later in London, Chicago, New York and Vienna. He practised at Andover, on the Saint John River, and from 1895 to 1898 in Saint John. Perhaps through connections with Lord Strathcona, the Canadian Pacific Railway appointed King as surgeon during construction of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway. In 1898 he moved to Cranbrook in the Kootenay Valley of south eastern British Columbia. The *Cranbrook Herald* was founded that year, and coal mines, lumber mills, cattle ranches and fruit farms developed nearby.

Dr. King remained in Cranbrook for the next 18 years. When called out at night, he rang a bell giving one of three signals: horse only, horse and sleigh, or horse and buggy. A few minutes later, his groom, who lived over the stable, had the

Mrs. King in her finery for a 1925 presentation at Buckingham Palace.

transportation ready. Later, he owned the first car in Cranbrook. At first, operating rooms were lit by acetylene lamps, nurses were volunteers and he sometimes performed an operation on a kitchen table. In April 1903, King was the first doctor to reach victims of the disastrous Frank Slide, a few kilometres east of Cranbrook.

Nellie King, daughter of Captain Dexter Sadler and his wife Nancy Williams Sadler, was born on a potato farm in 1878 on the Tobique River north of Fredericton. She attended a one-room school at Maple View. Her ancestors were Loyalists who migrated to the Saint John River Valley in the 1780s. When she was 16, the American Senator Coffin and his wife escorted Nellie for a season to Washington, where she became acquainted with Alice, daughter of a future president, Teddy Roosevelt. Later the Coffins took Nellie to Europe.

Nellie first saw her future husband one day as he walked up the railway tracks at Andover. "That's the man I'm going to marry," she said to herself. In 1906, at age 28, Nellie decided to marry a Mr. Birchell who had pursued her since they had first met in Washington a dozen years earlier. On the day she was to accept his proposal, her sister, Ida Baird, arranged a picnic. Canoes lined the bank of the Saint John River at Perth. Suddenly someone came running with a letter for Nellie. It was from B.C. "Nellie," the letter read, "No more nonsense. I'm coming back and you're going to marry me." Jim King and Nellie Sadler were married the following New Year's Day 1907 in the Andover Baptist Church. Even the jilted Birchell gave his blessing – from Washington, he sent a silver vase.

Nellie in the 1940s (above) and Dr. King (below) dressed as Speaker of the Senate, 1946.

The Kings headed west. By 1907 Dr. King was becoming prominent beyond the Kootenay Valley. In 1906, when Ralph Connor's popular novel, *The Doctor*, was published, Dr. King's friends claimed that he was the model for the main character, Dr. Barney Boyle. They were probably right. There are many similarities. The "respectful" and "masterful" Dr. Boyle arrives in ranching and mining country in B.C. as the Crow's Nest Pass line is being built. Like Dr. King, Boyle completed his medical training outside Canada. As medical superintendent during railway construction, the fictional doctor, like the real doctor, cares for immigrant workers living in construction camps. He prevents the spread of diphtheria and typhoid, and counsels workers on morality and depression. He establishes libraries and club houses. Both doctors, like the novelist himself, believed in human goodness and social improvement.

In the novel, the doctor dies before realizing his political aspirations. In 1903, however, his real-life model became the provincial Liberal member for Kootenay East, which he represented until

1909 when the Conservatives led by Premier Richard McBride almost eliminated the opposition. In 1909, McBride campaigned in Cranbrook. McBride and the Kings were friends. Political parties in B.C. had not yet polarized, and furthermore, the Kings valued friendship more than ideology. McBride dined with the Kings. "Now Richard," Nellie advised him, "if you say one word against the doctor tonight, our friendship is over." At the meeting, the big, handsome premier rose to speak. Nellie listened carefully. "Who brings your babies into this world?" McBride asked the crowd. "Who rides horseback to help you in the night? I'm going to ask you to vote for Dr. King ... to vote to keep Dr. King in Cranbrook where he is needed." King was defeated, but McBride remained a friend.

Dr. King was president of the B.C. Liberal Association and thus an important liaison with Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier, advising him on how to handle B.C. issues such as the Dominion response to a disastrous fire in the Kootenay Valley in August 1908. Three years later, King advised Laurier to let the provincial police handle the coal miners' strike in Crowsnest, lest Ottawa's interference have an adverse effect on candidate Jim King during the Dominion elections in September 1911. The advice, however, did not help and the happy voters of Cranbrook got to keep their doctor once again. In 1916, McBride resigned and the B.C. Liberals won the subsequent election. Dr. King served as Minister of Works in Victoria. In 1921, when William Lyon Mackenzie King became Prime Minister, he invited Dr. King (who was no relation) to Ottawa.

Why the invitation? In the election of December 1921, the Liberals had won only about half the 235 seats in the House of Commons. In Western Canada, they were all but wiped out, winning only three seats in B.C., with no strong Cabinet material. For the sake of national unity, the Prime Minister needed at least one good representative from each province. Also, as a doctor, Jim King was useful to the new Prime Minister, who wanted his Cabinet to represent a cross-section of the population, including the professions.

The election of 1921 left Mackenzie King with the first minority government since the 1850s and early 1860s when governments rose and fell too frequently. The Conservatives under Arthur Meighen held only 50 seats. More troublesome were the 66 seats held by a loose alliance of Progressive and Labour members, some of them former Liberals, representing discontented farmers and workers in Ontario and the Prairies. Even worse, the Liberals themselves were divided on tariffs and Mackenzie King's leadership skills.

To woo dissident, doubting MPs, Dr. King could help. Nellie once confided to the Prime Minister that her husband felt deeply, but he was loath to express his thoughts. He was thus a harmonizer, a quality much appreciated by the Prime Minister. Apparently Dr. King had not taken sides in the Liberal party's split over conscription in 1917. He got along with Progressives and although he spoke little French, he was close friends with francophone colleagues.

On 3 February 1922, Dr. King was appointed Minister of Public Works, and in March he won a by-election in Kootenay East. He was "honest and straight," the Prime Minister noted in his diary, and thus the right man to clean up Public Works, which had overspent its budget on the reconstruction of the Centre Block and the addition of the Peace Tower, following the fire of 1916. Public Works had a finger in costly pies, from interprovincial highways to post offices, wharves and even art treasures and an addition to the National Archives building. If the new minister performed well, carefully and honestly dispensing patronage through appointments and contracts, the Liberals stood to win more seats in the next election.

During 1922 and 1923, Mackenzie King tinkered with freight rates, tariffs and wheat marketing, measures that appealed to some Progressives without alienating high-tariff Liberals, including Dr. King himself. Some Progressive and Labour MPs, particularly J.S. Woodsworth, wanted a national welfare scheme for sick, disabled, aged and unemployed Canadians, following the model of Germany and Britain. Except for a pension for returned soldiers, their widows and dependents, implemented in 1918, Canada's young welfare system was administered by provinces and municipalities. The Prime Minister agreed that the state should care for needy people. His book, *Industry and Humanity*, published in 1918, advocated unemployment insurance, old age pensions, mothers' allowances and the eight-hour working day.

In Dr. James King, Mackenzie King had an ally. In December 1921, along with every other member of the B.C. Legislature, Dr. King had voted to support a federal old-age-pension scheme. As a doctor, he had served sick, old and injured people. His wife's delicate health gave Dr. King first-hand experience with illness. She once suffered a miscarriage en route from B.C. to New Brunswick, and once almost died of typhoid fever. To aid her recovery, the doctor ordered yogurt – "Bulgarian culture" – from New York once a week.

Dr. King supported social welfare. Not so the 65 Quebec Liberals. They represented a province where the Roman Catholic Church controlled charity and welfare. In December 1923, however, the loss of two by-elections forced the Liberals to

The Kings and niece Elena Macdonald en route to Hawaii and Japan, 1934.

appeal once again to the Progressives. In 1924, the cabinet appointed a committee, which recommended national old-age pensions. The government introduced a bill. Debate ended when the House was dissolved for the 1925 elections, which again produced inconclusive results. The Conservatives won 116 seats, and the Liberals only 99 seats. The Progressives fell to 24 seats. The Conservatives expected to take power, but the Progressives, who held the balance of power, chose to keep Mackenzie King in power because he promised farm aid, Western railways, tariff changes and old-age pensions.

During the 1926 session, Dr. King retained Public Works and was appointed Acting Minister of Labour. It was he who reintroduced the pension bill, which had received Woodsworth's approval in committee. In May 1926, the bill passed third reading in the Commons, but was defeated by the Conservative-dominated Senate, which argued, among other things, that the scheme was an infringement on provincial rights. (On "pensions", the British North America Act was mum, since they did not exist in the mid-1860s.) Before the bill could be reintroduced, a customs scandal and constitutional crisis intervened.

While her husband served in government, Nellie King thrived in Ottawa. Nellie defies feminist labels. On the one hand, she advised brides that clothes, a car and entertainment should all be postponed in favour of a cook in the kitchen "so that you have a good dinner on the table when your husband comes home." She was not impressed that her adopted province allowed women to vote in 1917 or that she could vote for the first time federally in 1921. She thought "Aggie" Macphail, in 1921 the first woman elected to the federal house, a bit odd. Nellie could not have cared less that until 1929 she was not officially a "person".

In addition, she was concerned about appearance. "My dear," she once told her niece, Elena Macdonald, "the women in our family are not blessed with looks, but we age well." She wore clothing tailored by Mr. Gordon, whose couturier house was located in Murphy-Gamble, a department store on Sparks Street. "Gordon" made frequent buying trips to Paris, and his dresses and suits helped Nellie, at least once, to make it onto the list of the ten best-dressed women in Canada.

Nevertheless, she was a woman of influence, both public and private. Like Loyalist leaders of early New Brunswick, Nellie valued education, community leadership and high standards of public behaviour. She had grown up in Baptist country not known for tolerance, yet she demonstrated a generosity of spirit remarkable for her day, and indeed for any day. She treated Chou, her Chinese cook, with respect, and he in turn adored her. "We come from a very narrow-minded province and must do everything we can to shake off its effects," Elena remembers her saying. "I never want to hear you utter a word against a Jew, a French Canadian or a Roman Catholic. Hold the right thoughts and look for the good. It's in everyone."

Soon after arriving in the capital in late March 1922, she announced her presence. The *Ottawa Citizen*'s "Personal News of Ottawa People" reported that Mrs. King "received" on Monday afternoon, 3 April, in her husband's offices, numbers 228 and 230 on Parliament Hill. Later in April, she was prominent at the Cabinet Ministers' Wives Reception on Parliament Hill. Mondays became her "at home" day in their house at 190 Somerset Street near Elgin Avenue.

Nellie soon became one of the bachelor Prime Minister's chief hostesses. Like the better-known Joan Patteson, Nellie was above suspicion and gossip, and always discreet. Ever gracious and interested in people, she had only to enter a room and the party began. The Prime Minister must have appreciated her method of assuring lively parties, by mixing people on the rise with those on the way down. A strong, self-confident woman, she made no demands on the Prime Minister, and like him, she had a precise memory for dates, including his birthday, 17 December, and importantly, the anniversary of the death of his mother, 18 December 1917, which Nellie noted with a discreet word of sympathy.

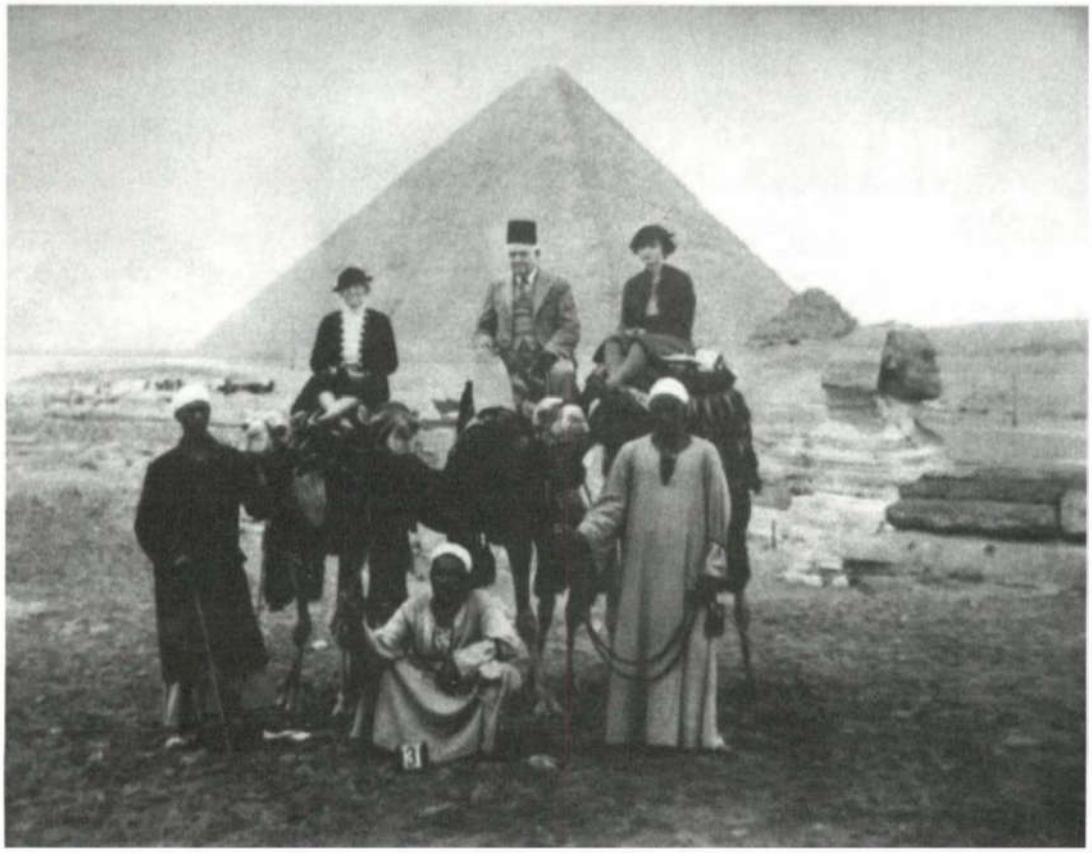
On 2 July 1927, Charles Lindbergh was coming to Ottawa. Mackenzie King telephoned Nellie. "I want to have a dinner for Lindbergh," he told her. "I'll send my secretary down. Arrange it, will

you?" On 2 July, Dr. King, the Prime Minister and other officials welcomed Lindbergh in front of the Peace Tower. At midnight, Jim and Nellie joined Lindbergh, actress Margaret Anglin and other guests at Laurier House. At the Country Club across the river the following evening about 40 people, including the Dominion Archivist, Arthur Doughty, and Vincent Massey, assembled for dinner. The famed aviator gave Nellie an autographed photograph for Elena.

Throughout the '20s, '30s and '40s, at Kingsmere and Laurier House, Jim, Nellie and the PM dined with guests such as the Prince of Wales, Mme. Chaing Kai-shek, the Roosevelts, the Trumans, and Queen Marie of Romania. The couple represented Canada when President Harding paid a brief visit to Vancouver in July 1923. Nellie and Elena had a suite in the old Hotel Vancouver on Georgia Street. The President and Dr. King were riding in an open car below. Nellie would not look. "Somebody's going to try to shoot the President," she predicted, "and they'll miss and hit the doctor." A week later the President died in Seattle, though not by gunshot. When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth arrived in Quebec City in 1939, Nellie and Jim King greeted them, and later met them in Ottawa, Vancouver and Victoria.

In 1925, Nellie and Jim King, along with Peter C. Larkin, High Commissioner and tea magnate, were Canada's representatives at the opening of Canada House, new headquarters on Trafalgar Square for the High Commission, established in 1880 by Sir John A. Macdonald. The Minister of Public Works had tried to buy B.C. House, ideally located between Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus, but Premier Oliver, Dr. King's former boss, was unwilling to sell it. In 1924, Public Works secured the Union Club on a long-term lease. After expensive renovations, Canada House was opened on 29 June 1925. The Kings were presented at Buckingham Palace.

Nellie's devotion to her husband and to the Prime Minister took her, at least once, into the realm of power politics. In June 1926, she helped save the government when liquor smuggling threatened to destroy it. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, governments had attempted to regulate the sale and consumption of liquor. By 1918, the country was officially "dry," which meant that smugglers worked more intensely to transport liquor across borders. Nellie's sister, Ida Baird, lived in Andover, New Brunswick, near the Maine border. One morning in 1918, she remarked with a smile that cars laden with bootlegged rum shook her house so much



The Kings and Elena, Egypt, 1934.

In London for the opening of Canada House, 25 June 1925, Dr. King with cane and spats; Nellie looking smart in a Parisian Rodier coat.

that she "never slept a wink all night." Since Kootenay East bordered on Alberta and the U.S.A., Dr. King's riding enjoyed a sometimes violent liquor trade, especially after 1920 when the American government placed an absolute restriction on the manufacture, sale and distribution of liquor.

Liquor manufacturers and smugglers were not averse to tempting politicians and police. In 1925 when it was discovered that the Minister of Customs and Excise, Jacques Bureau, had accepted liquor kickbacks, George Boivin replaced him as minister. At the request of a Liberal MP from New Brunswick, Boivin intervened to delay the sentence of a Liberal supporter connected with smuggling. A parliamentary committee called Boivin's action "unjustifiable". French-Canadian MPs, with vivid memories of the abuse heaped on them during the conscription crisis of 1917, refused to see Boivin sacrificed.

Progressive and Labour MPs were on the horns of a dilemma. They preached; now they had to practise. But if they supported the censure motion, they risked defeating the Liberal government, and thus any hope of implementing social welfare. For five days, from 21 to 25 June, the government teetered on the brink of defeat. Two other issues, a disputed election result in Alberta, and that province's claim to natural resources, complicated matters. "I am determined to fight to the last ditch," the Prime Minister wrote in his diary on Monday, 21 June 1926, "in holding the citadel against the Tories."

Nellie, it appears, took up diplomatic arms to help the Prime Minister hold his citadel. While Dr. King debated late in the House, twelve-year-old Elena opened and closed the front door at 190 Somerset Street to several politicians. Who were these MPs? Nellie kept no diary and Elena was too young to note names. Was Nellie using her personal and political charm on members from Quebec, perhaps George Boivin, to prevent a cabinet split? Was she talking to Woodsworth and Heaps? Did she remind them, ever so sweetly, what they already knew – that the defeat of the Liberals would dash hopes for pensions? Nellie had high standards of public behaviour. She also had good political instincts.

By Saturday, 26 June, Mackenzie King realized that he could not hold the support of the Progressives much longer. That evening, he consulted Dr. King, George Boivin and other members of his cabinet, then he was driven to Rideau Hall to ask for dissolution. Perhaps he was thinking of Sir John A. Macdonald in 1874, the year of Mackenzie King's birth. Narrowly defeated in a House vote, Macdonald resigned. The new prime minister, Alexander Mackenzie, won the subsequent election by dwelling on the Pacific Scandal. Strong on strategy and precedent,

Mackenzie King may have wanted to to escape Macdonald's fate.

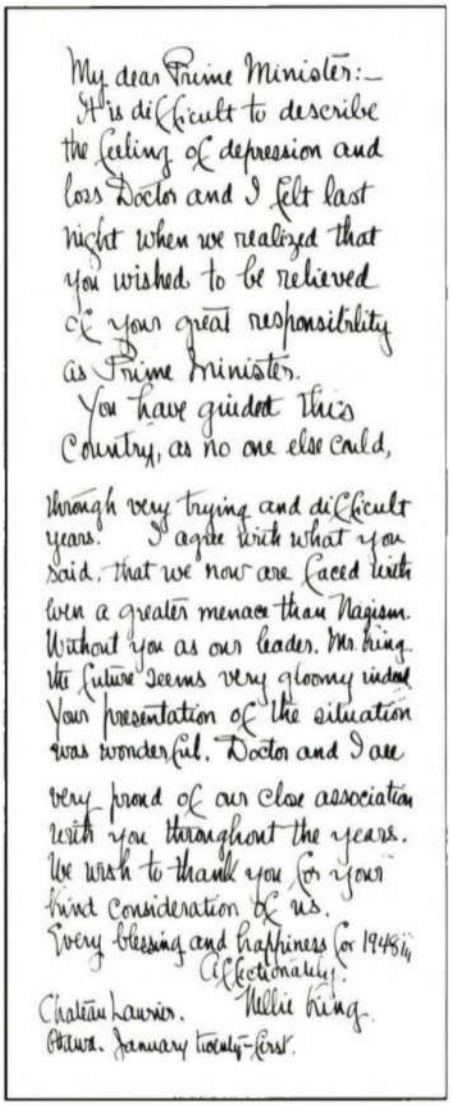
Instead, Governor General Lord Byng asked Arthur Meighen to form a government. It lasted three days. Now it was Meighen who had to fight the election as the first Canadian prime minister to be defeated by a House vote. The customs issue was camouflaged by the constitutional debate – the "King-Byng affair" – which, according to Dr. King, united Liberals and some Progressives behind Mackenzie King. Whether or not the Governor General had the right to refuse the prime minister's request for dissolution, only young John Diefenbaker, Mackenzie King's unsuccessful opponent in Prince Albert, knew for sure.

On 14 September 1926 the Liberals won a majority. Had Mackenzie King's promise to Woodsworth lacked credibility, the Liberals could have postponed pensions. They did not. In fact, the bill was introduced immediately in the new session, in December 1926. The minister in charge was Dr. James King, now the sole B.C. Liberal. Although Mackenzie King was vexed with B.C. voters, he praised Dr. King's humanitarianism and good will, and appointed him minister of two departments – Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment (established in 1918 to deal with returning soldiers); and Health (established in 1919 to deal with the influenza epidemic).

"I am intensely interested in seeing that the principle of old age pensions is established in Canada," Dr. King stated in the House on 3 March 1927, as the debate on the third reading concluded. The next day, the bill passed. This time the Senate approved. The plan was to be jointly financed by federal and provincial governments, and administered by the latter. At age 70, Canadians of little means (hence the "means test") were to receive a monthly cheque of up to $20. According to political economist Kenneth Bryden, the act of 1927 was the first important and continuing joint federal-provincial programme, heralding a new age of co-operative federalism. J.S. Woodsworth, Dr. King always argued, had made it possible to do exactly what most Liberals wanted to do anyway.

In 1927, Dr. King's Health Department established the first of three mobile health units on CNR trains to serve remote regions. In 1928 he merged his two departments into one Department of Pensions and National Health. In 1930, his ministry restored some veterans' pensions and insurance, streamlined the Board of Pensions Commissioners, and created a War Veterans' Allowance Act in order to provide pensions for unemployable veterans from ages 60 to 69. In May 1930, more as a friend than a minister, Dr. King worked to secure $5,000 for war artist Mary Riter Hamilton who was "destitute" in a Vancouver hospital.

In June 1930, Mackenzie King appointed Jim King to the Senate where in 1942, he became Leader of the Government side, then Speaker from 1945 to 1949. No longer a cabinet minister, he had more time to travel. He once claimed to have visited every country but South Africa and Russia. In 1910, he had attended the Western Congress of Medicine and Surgery in Budapest. In 1913, he was in Chicago as a founder and governor of the American College of Surgeons. The Kings visited South America in the 1930s. In the fall of 1934, they took Elena on a global tour. From Vancouver, they sailed to Japan, whose readers were becoming familiar with at least one part of Canada – a Japanese-language version of *Anne of Green Gables* had been available since 1928. In Tokyo, the Kings visited Herbert Marler, appointed in 1929 as Canada's first diplomatic "minister" (the term "ambassador" came later) in Japan. The Kings had been offered the position, but Nellie turned it down. The Kings did not have the money of the Marlers nor of Vincent Massey, appointed to Washington in 1926 as Canada's first minister abroad with full diplomatic status. At that time, the ministers paid for much of the elaborate entertainment.



My dear Prime Minister:–
It is difficult to describe the feeling of depression and loss Doctor and I felt last night when we realized that you wished to be relieved of your great responsibility as Prime Minister.
You have guided this Country, as no one else could, through very trying and difficult years. I agree with what you said, that we now are faced with even a greater menace than Nazism. Without you as our leader, Mr. King, the future seems very gloomy indeed. Your presentation of the situation was wonderful. Doctor and I are very proud of our close association with you throughout the years. We wish to thank you for your kind consideration of us.
Every blessing and happiness for 1948.
Affectionately,
Nellie King.
Chateau Laurier.
Ottawa. January twenty-first.

Nellie's letter to Mackenzie King on his retirement from office, January 1948.

From Japan, the Kings sailed to India where they were the guests of the Viceroy and Vicereine, Lord and Lady Willingdon, acquaintances of the Kings since 1926 when Willingdon had succeeded Lord Byng as Governor General. Lady Willingdon sometimes had tea on Somerset Street. When they were leaving for India in 1931, they invited Jim and Nellie to visit them.

One evening in New Delhi, the Willingdons hosted a banquet for their visitors, who also included the Dukes of Norfolk and Northumber-

land. The honoured guests stood at the head of a marble stairway lined with a Sikh guard of honour, and watched 78 guests arrive – bejewelled maharajahs, marharanees in colourful saris, and uniformed British officials. Dinner was served on hand-pounded silver plates. The Maharajah of Gwalior, whose coat was buttoned with huge rubies, invited the Kings to spend a couple of days with him, but Nellie insisted on viewing the burning funeral pyres – the Burning Ghats – of Benares. She had read about them as a child. "Nellie," Lord Willingdon urged, "he'll give you emeralds. He'll give you rubies. You're not going to Gwalior?" The little girl from the New Brunswick potato farm went to Benares.

The three Canadians crossed from Bombay to Suez in the Italian liner, the *Conto Rosso*. Nellie wanted to upgrade their quarters. She showed the purser a gold pocketwatch given to Dr. King by adoring Italian railway navvies in Cranbrook 35 years earlier. The Kings were relocated to the Royal Suite. They spent Christmas in Paris with the minister to France, Phillipe Roy, and his wife, appointed in 1928 when Canada opened full diplomatic relations with France. On Christmas Eve, the five Canadians attended the opera. In London they dined with the High Commissioner and went to the theatre with opera singer Sarah Fischer whom Nellie had promoted in Ottawa in the 1920s.

Throughout the 1930s and '40s, Nellie sent a box of holly from the West Coast to help Mackenzie King celebrate Christmas as well as his birthday. In May 1944, she welcomed him home from London where he addressed the British Houses of Parliament. "Canada is proud to have had such a worthy and able representative at the [D-Day] Conference," she told him. "I am so proud of you!" she continued, and wished him the health and strength to enable him "to continue to serve our Canada during the coming years."

In January 1948, when Mackenzie King announced his intention to resign, Nellie wrote to him:

> It is difficult to describe the feeling of depression and loss Doctor and I felt last night when we realized that you wished to be relieved of your great responsibility as Prime Minister. You have guided this country, as no one else could, through very trying and difficult years.

On Wednesday, 26 January 1949, to mark the opening of Parliament, the wives of the Speakers of the Commons and the Senate hosted parties. In the Speaker's Chambers, Nellie greeted about 1,000 people. A few hours later, she suffered a massive heart attack. She died the following Friday. Mackenzie King paid a visit to Dr. King that day. At her funeral, the retired PM was an honorary pallbearer. Both Houses of Parliament accorded Nellie the honour of rising for the day, an act usually reserved for members. A few days later, the Premier of B.C., the Chief Justice and vice-regal representatives paid tribute at a burial service in Vancouver.

Dr. King continued to serve in government. He had participated in the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945. He took part in discussions with Newfoundland in 1949.

In 1943, the Marsh Report had recommended an expansion of the social welfare system. The Liberals had already enacted unemployment insurance in 1940; baby bonuses followed in 1944. In 1950, MP Jean Lesage and Dr. King co-chaired a joint Commons-Senate committee to revise the pension act of 1927. The resulting Old Age Security and Old Age Assistance Acts of 1951 provided a pension of $40 for all Canadians 70 and over, while retaining the means test for seniors 65 to 69. The plan was funded and administered solely by the federal government. (A decade later, Premier Lesage was not quite so interested in expanding federal powers.)

In 1953, Dr. King remarried and retired to Vancouver where he died in 1955. Fellow senators paid him tribute. Senator Gouin, son of Sir Lomer Gouin, former Quebec premier and Dr. King's colleague in the cabinet of the early 1920s, called his death a personal loss, and claimed that Dr. King was familiar not only with problems in the Maritimes and Western Canada, but also that he had a perfect understanding of Quebec. "He was a gentleman in every sense of the word," Senator Burchill of New Brunswick recalled, "always courteous and kind." "*Je dépose sur sa tombe*," Senator Vaillancourt said on 14 July 1955, "*l'hommage de ma reconnaissance, mon plus amical souvenir.*"

"It was a Cinderella story, a great love story," Elena recalls today in her Vancouver home filled with mementoes of her aunt and uncle. Rather cynical and self-centred, most Canadians of today can scarcely imagine that long-ago world populated by Ralph Connor characters preaching the Kingdom of God on Earth; by titled British peers presiding over a glittering, deferential Empire; by an unassuming hero who flew solo across the Atlantic, then dropped in for tea; by a woman from a New Brunswick potato farm who became the "Dominion's Hostess"; and by her husband who presided over the birth of a national social welfare system in order to help "those most in need of their country's aid." ◆

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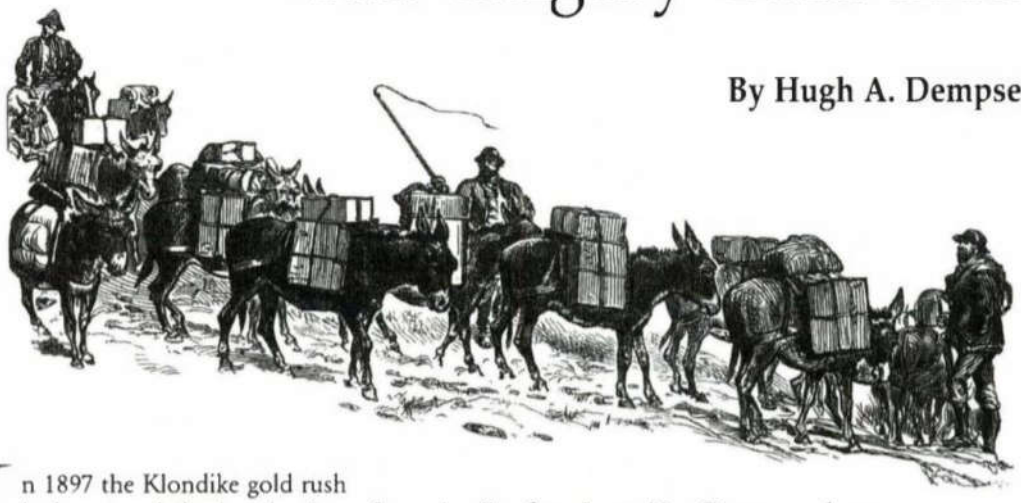
The Calgary Gold Brick Caper



By Hugh A. Dempsey

In 1897 the Klondike gold rush had captured the imagination of people all over the continent. Shopkeepers, farmers, and professional men were tossing aside their jobs and heading for the Yukon, some taking the steamer from Vancouver or Seattle, and a few trying the "back-door" route through Edmonton and down the Mackenzie River. There was an enthusiastic belief that the North was rich with undiscovered gold deposits and all that one needed was a little luck and lots of hard work to become rich.

Even before the Klondike discoveries, the mining industry had been active in British Columbia and Calgarians were among the most prominent investors. The Calgary firm of Young & Luxton published a guidebook giving "all information about the mining districts of B.C. and how to get there," while the *Calgary Herald* carried a regular column of mining news. By the summer of 1897, Calgary lumberman James Walker and lawyer Peter McCarthy were working a large deposit of galena found on their claim; a vein of silver was found near New Denver; and a new gold strike was made at the Wild Horse diggings at Fort Steele.

On a warm July day in 1897, a grizzled old prospector stopped hesitantly in the foyer of the Molson's Bank on Calgary's Stephen Avenue. He was a big man with a black beard, broad-brimmed hat, and brand new "store bought" clothes. He was shy and ill at ease in the unfamiliar surroundings.

George C. McGregor, the manager, thought he was someone who was down on his luck and was looking for a small loan. He was about to send him away when the man asked if he was Mister McGregor. The banker nodded.

"You ever have a brother named Hank?"

The banker said he had not.

"I'm awful sorry to hear it," said the prospector. "We've struck it rich up thar in the mountains and I come back ter look for Hank. You ain't Hank but you look awful like him."

The man introduced himself as Sam Fowler,

"The samples of gold, the appearance of the grizzled miner with calloused hands, and the general excitement of the gold rush convinced McGregor and Young that they should investigate the story further. If it proved to be true, and not a hoax, then they might become one-third partners in the development of a potentially rich lode. But first, they had to examine the two gold bricks."

originally from Kentucky. He explained that he had been in partnership with Hank but they had split up and Hank had settled in Medicine Hat. After making his big gold strike, Sam had gone to The Hat to look up his old partner to see if he would go back into business with him but learned that his friend had died. He had been told that Hank had a brother in Calgary so he had come looking for him to see if he wanted to become a partner. Sam said he had taken out more than 150 pounds of gold; now he wanted to sell it and buy machinery to develop the lode.

Views of Calgary in the 1890s.

In light of the sensational gold discoveries in British Columbia and the North, McGregor thought the story might be worth looking into so he took the miner to see a lawyer who had been investing in mines and knew something about the business. When they got to his office, however, they found that the man was away on a holiday. The banker then went to the offices of the *Calgary Herald*, for he knew the editor, John J. Young, was interested in mining.

Sam repeated his story to the editor, then produced some pieces of gold-bearing quartz and a small chunk of pure gold. Later, when they were examined by jeweller L.H. Doll, the quartz showed a remarkably high gold content while the chunk, which weighed 3.5 ounces, was worth $60.

Now that he had an audience, Sam Fowler told the story of his gold find. He said he had been a prospector for many years and after he had split up with Hank he had become the partner of a British Columbia Indian named Victoria Pecheco. When they heard about the rich northern gold discoveries, the men decided to prospect in the nethermost reaches of British Columbia. They travelled along the coast, then up the Skeena River and over the summit to an unexplored wilderness. When they were about 500 miles north of Ashcroft, near the headwaters of the Peace River, they had found a ledge of gold-bearing quartz that was 20 feet wide and went right through the mountain. They estimated it was at least a mile and a half long. At the bottom of a nearby canyon, Pecheco's wives had found gold nuggets in a creek.

Fowler said the ledge was phenomenally rich in free gold that could be taken out with only a pick and crowbar. For three months, he and Pecheco had mined the ledge and with the help of a mule they had ground the quartz and extracted the gold with mercury, or quicksilver. Fowler had then lined a kettle with white clay and melted down the gold, pouring it into two crude molds.

Each of the bricks they produced weighed about 75 pounds. They had then travelled to Ashcroft where their arrival had aroused considerable attention. Fowler produced a clipping from a Kamloops newspaper which contained an item from Ashcroft. Entitled "A Rich Find," the article stated:

> Considerable excitement has been caused by the arrival from the north of Sam Fowler, better known among old timers as Trail Sam and Pechecko Victoria, the well known Indian chief. They brought with them the richest gold quartz ever seen in town, as well as a considerable quantity of gold, some of which they disposed of to one of our merchants. There is naturally a great amount of excitement and eager curiosity among old miners. Sam is an illiterate man and both he and the Indian are very reticent as to the exact locality of the find. They have left for the east to find an old pal with whom they will proceed back to the mine with machinery, etc.

According to Fowler, they got $1,200 for the gold they sold in Ashcroft. With this money they bought clothes for themselves and Pecheco's wives and two tickets to Medicine Hat. The Indian had become sick from eating too many oranges and bananas so they had stopped at Revelstoke where Pecheco had made a camp a short distance out of town.

The samples of gold, the appearance of the grizzled miner with calloused hands, and the general excitement of the gold rush convinced McGregor and Young that they should investigate the story further. If it proved to be true, and not a hoax, then they might become one-third partners in the development of a potentially rich lode. But first, they had to examine the two gold bricks.

Fowler explained they were back in his camp and invited the two men to come to Revelstoke. McGregor was unable to get away, but the editor of the *Calgary Herald* agreed to make the trip. They took the train the following day and upon arrival in Revelstoke they walked to the camp about half a mile from the lower town, just past the cemetery on the Big Bend trail. Fowler went ahead to explain to the Indian that Hank had died in Medicine Hat but that Young might be interested in joining them. Pecheco could not speak English so everything he said was translated by the other miner.

The two gold bars were brought out from their hiding place and Fowler, although a strong man, had difficulty carrying them into camp. Young was invited to weigh them on scales which the miners had brought from Kamloops. One was 75 pounds and the other 74. Young was then given an auger and asked to drill each bar, selecting a sample from any place he wished. He was also told to put his own secret mark on each bar so they could not be switched on him.

When this was done, Fowler and Young went into town to find an assayer. Upon enquiry, they were sent to T.B. Scott, a Spokane man who was just in the process of setting up an assaying business in town. He took them to his room in the Victoria Hotel where he melted the two samples, put them through a nitric acid test, and pronounced them to be pure gold, valued at $19 an ounce. On that basis, the two bars were worth $33,600. The assayer expressed great interest in the samples and tried to press the old prospector for details but Fowler wasn't talking.

"Calgary Herald" editor John J. Young: dreams of wealth.

When the two men returned to the camp, Fowler suggested that Young take the two bars to Calgary, but the Indian objected. He had been victimized once before and would not let the gold bars out of his hands. After some discussion, he agreed that if he got his one-third share of $11,200 in cash he would let them go. For his part, Fowler was prepared to wait until the gold bars went to the mint before getting his share.

The deal seemed like a good one; they would be paying $11,200, but would have two gold bricks worth $33,600. Young and Fowler returned to Calgary and explained the deal to the banker. Upon McGregor's recommendation, Molson's Bank was willing to provide the money, as long as one of the bricks was given to them for security.

McGregor drew out the funds on Friday, 30 July, and the three men returned to Revelstoke where Young examined the bars and pronounced them to be the same ones he had seen on his first trip. McGregor handed over the money, took possession of the bars, and the two men went back to Calgary the following day. McGregor placed one of the bars in the bank vault and had the other shipped to Molson's head office.

On Monday morning the banker took a chip from the remaining brick and sent it to Calgary assayers Bott & Embree for confirmation. A short time later, he was shocked when they reported that the sample was pure copper. The rest of the brick was rushed to the assayers who confirmed it was not gold worth $19 an ounce but gilded copper valued at 11¢ a pound.

The editor of the *Calgary Herald* and manager of Molson's Bank had fallen for the hoary gold brick swindle.

An investigation revealed how the scam had worked. The article in the Kamloops paper had been submitted by Fowler and published in good faith. T.B. Scott, the Spokane assayer who had examined the specimens in Revelstoke, was part of the gang. In fact, when Fowler had made his initial trip to Calgary, Scott had accompanied him and they had stayed at the same hotel. At each step in the swindle, the men had planned it down to the last detail. Fowler appeared to be a simple, illiterate old prospector who wanted to co-operate with his Calgary friends but had to cope with the suspicions of his Indian partner – who was not really an Indian. Young could not communicate directly with the Indian for he supposedly spoke no English. And the fact that McGregor and Young had to pay only a third of the value of the gold bricks, yet could hold them as security, seemed to make the deal foolproof.

The Mounted Police were notified, but Fowler and the "Indian" had disappeared. On a guarantee from Molson's Bank that they would cover the expenses, Staff Sergeant A.F.M. Brooke of the North West Mounted Police was sent in pursuit of the swindlers. They were traced to Seattle where they had exchanged $7,148 of the Molson's bank notes for American money on the same day that McGregor had learned of the swindle.

Staff Sergeant Brooke was told by Seattle police that the description of Fowler fitted a man named H.W. Knolton who had worked the same scam in California. When Brooke learned that Knolton had been arrested, he went to Los Angeles to witness the trial. "He worked his Gold Brick off exactly the same as Fowler did his," said the Mountie, "and got $10,000 for it. He was looking for a man named Burgess in place of Hank, an old partner." However, the description of Knolton did not match that of Sam Fowler.

The chief of the San Francisco police sent Staff Sergeant Brooke to see an informer, a former gold brick swindler who "knows every Bunco man in the country." When he heard the story of the Calgary scam, the informer was sure it was the work of a Chicago gang led by a man named John Snerley. He wrote their names on a slip of paper and then gave descriptions which clearly matched the three con men. John Snerley had played the part of Fowler, with Bob Lyons as the Indian, and John Blackwell the assayer. Later evidence indicated that these three were the likely perpetrators, but in spite of the evidence they were never apprehended.

Because of the prominence of the two Calgarians involved, attempts were made to conceal the story, but it was too good to be suppressed. Finally, there were so many rumours that even J.J. Young's own *Calgary Herald* was obliged to publish an account of it, although the men's names were not mentioned. The *Herald* referred to McGregor as "one of our city bankers" and Young as "a citizen". The *Alberta Tribune* called them "the bank manager" and "his friend the citizen". It took the *Macleod Gazette* – which had no love for Young or the *Herald* – to refer to both parties by their right names.

The immediate result of the debacle was that Molson's Bank demanded McGregor's resignation. His career in ruins, he set out to search for the swindlers and then dropped out of sight. The bank replaced him with a less adventurous manager from Trenton, Ontario. As for Young, he became the laughing stock of Calgary. Years later, after he had served in the Territorial legislature and was one of the most influential journalists in Western Canada, the gold brick incident still haunted him. In 1904, the newly-formed Alberta & Eastern British Columbia Press Association wrote a series of highly flattering articles about leading editors. The biography of J.J. Young was fawningly complimentary but the author could not resist adding a somewhat distorted account of the gold brick incident. He stated:

> Mr. Young ... has operated largely, and very successfully, in British Columbia mines. Many of his ventures in this direction have brought him large sums. If rumor reports correctly only one of the many on which he entered turned out disastrous – that in which he, with a bank manager and certain other equally prominent Calgary men, was induced to purchase a Brick, the product of a gold mine of extraordinary richness. There are many versions of the story, but all agree that the metal did not assay up to standard, that the vendor disappeared suddenly after receiving the proceeds, and that the purchasers were all much wiser – and angrier – men.

Then, returning to his obsequious style of flattery, the writer immediately defended Young and concluded:

> Which of us, in his time, has not been gold-bricked? Indeed he has much to be thankful for if in his lifetime he has been gold-bricked only once.
>
> Amen. ◆

Hugh A. Dempsey is Chief Curator Emeritus of the Glenbow Museum, Calgary, and the author of many books on Western Canadian history.

'A Printer is Indispensably Necessary'

The tribulations of Canada's earliest printers

By Chris Raible

The press came to Canada as a creature of the British government. (There were no newspapers – probably no printing at all – in New France.) Colonial officials had no truck with notions of liberty of the press. To them the press was simply a part, albeit an essential part, of the machinery of government.

"A printer is indispensably necessary," mused Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe in 1791 as he laid plans for the new province of Upper Canada. He was echoing what earlier administrators had already recognized: the government must have a medium for its messages. Laws and proclamations needed to be publicized – that is, published.

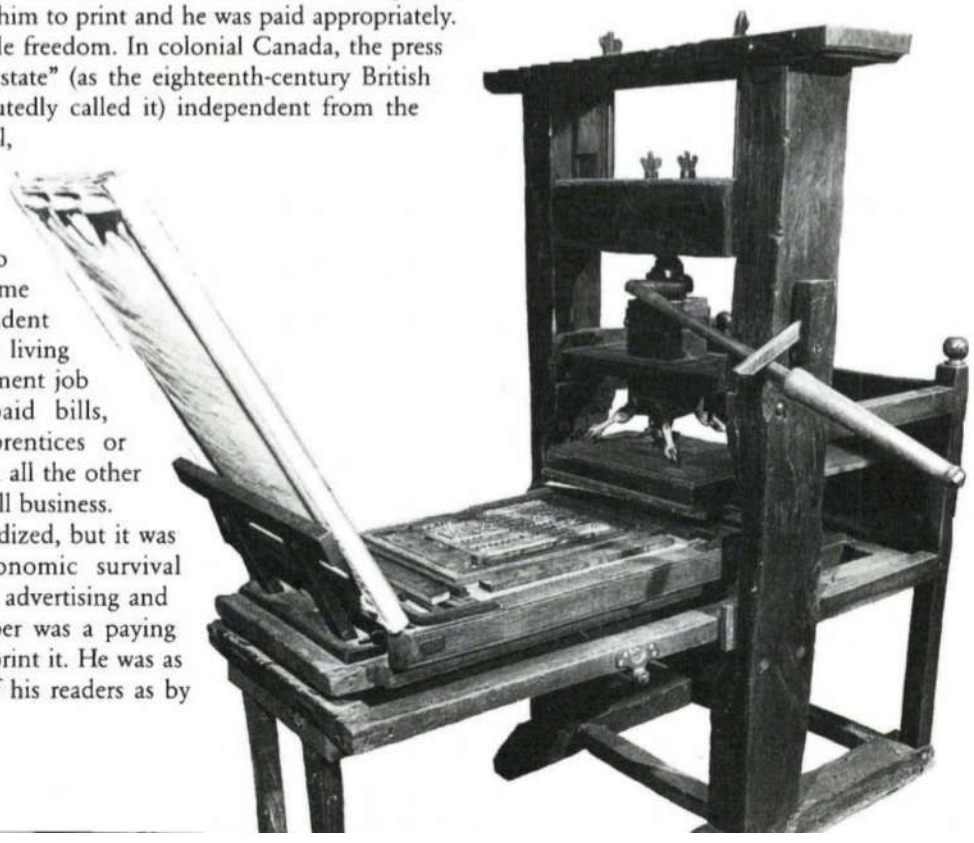
The King's Printer, as he came to be designated, was a highly skilled craftsman, employed to set his types accurately and attractively, to operate his press quickly and efficiently. He was provided with his tools and supplies, but he was not salaried. His work space was provided and his personal expenses were subsidized, but he held no formal office. He was paid for each job undertaken.

The King's Printer was primarily engaged to produce a newspaper which he contracted to publish on a weekly basis. In each province the columns of the *Gazette* (named after the *London Gazette*, the organ of the government since 1665) carried all the notices which the colonial administrators wished to circulate. The printer printed what his superiors instructed him to print and he was paid appropriately.

As an editor/publisher he had little freedom. In colonial Canada, the press was not thought of as the "fourth estate" (as the eighteenth-century British parliamentarian Edmund Burke reputedly called it) independent from the Lords Spiritual, the Lords Temporal, and the Commons. It was never intended for the British North American press to be free.

The King's Printer, however, was no well-paid placeman, he held no full-time official post. He was an independent entrepreneur. He made much of his living from private as well as from government job printing. He collected money, paid bills, purchased supplies, employed apprentices or clerks, kept accounts, and engaged in all the other activities involved in operating a small business.

The *Gazette* was government-subsidized, but it was not completely underwritten. Economic survival meant that the printer had to solicit advertising and collect subscriptions. Unless his paper was a paying proposition, he could not afford to print it. He was as much influenced by the opinions of his readers as by the instructions of his employers.



This wooden screw-press has traditionally been identified as the one Louis Roy brought to Upper Canada in 1792.

To create his paper, the printer read, wrote, reviewed, edited – became a journalist. A craftsman expects to make a living. An entrepreneur seeks to make a fortune. A journalist hopes to make a mark upon his world. As the editor of the *Upper Canada Gazette* declared in his first issue, he wanted his paper to be "useful, entertaining, and instructive."

As a journalist, the King's Printer was in a position of some influence. The *Gazette* was his responsibility; its readers were his clients. Along with official government notices, his paper contained news to inform, articles to educate, anecdotes and poems to entertain, and commentaries to persuade.

Under the direction of the British Crown, Canadian administrators held positions of authority. They saw the *Gazette* as theirs. Its readers were their subjects. The paper was one of the tools with which they ruled. It was an instrument with which they might direct and regulate, not simply educate or inform. Its columns were the vehicle by which official words went forth in printed form.

Bartholomew Green, Jr. brought a printing press from Boston to Halifax in 1751. The newly established British colonial government was in need of printing and was willing to pay for it. Green died, but his partner, John Bushell, carried on. The first printers in Canada – more precisely, in Nova Scotia – thus came from the American colonies, not from Great Britain.

Indeed, nearly all of the early Canadian printers were American, by experience if not by birth. In the eyes of colonial officials, these printers were thus all suspect, tainted by Yankee ideas.

The first Canadian newspaper, the *Halifax Gazette* – issued on 23 March 1762 – was anything but an independent organ. It was totally dependent upon government subsidy. Editor/printer Bushell published official proclamations and legal notices, and filled the rest of his small paper with shipping news and information

The first and last pages of an eight-page pamphlet printed in Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), Upper Canada, in 1793 by Louis Roy.

Acts of the Legislature
OF HIS MAJESTY'S PROVINCE OF
Upper Canada,

Passed in the First Session,
and in the Thirty Second Year of the Reign of
OUR SOVEREIGN LORD
GEORGE THE THIRD.

CAP. I.

AN ACT to repeal certain parts of an Act passed in the Fourteenth Year of His Majesty's Reign, intituled an Act for making more effectual Provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec in North America; and to introduce the English Law, as the Rule of Decision in all Matters of Controversy relative to Property and Civil Rights.

WHEREAS by an Act passed in the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, entitled an Act for making more effectual Provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec in North America, it was among other things provided, "That in all Matters of Controversy relative to Property and Civil Rights, resort should "be had to the Laws of Canada as the Rule for the Decision of the same;" such Provision being manifestly and avowedly intended for the accomodation of His Majesty's Canadian Subjects: And whereas since the passing of the Act aforesaid, that part of the late Province of Quebec, now comprehended within the Province of Upper Canada, having become inhabited principally by British Subjects, born and educated in Countries where the English Laws were established, and who are unaccustomed to the Laws of Canada, it is inexpedient that the Provision aforesaid contained in the said Act of the Fourteenth Year of his present Majesty, should be continued in this Province; Be it enacted by the Kings Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Assembly of the Province of Upper Canada, constituted and assembled by virtue of and under the Authority of an Act passed in the Parliament of Great Britain, entitled an Act to repeal certain parts of an Act passed in the Fourteenth Year of His Majesty's Reign, intituled an Act for making more effectual Provisions for the Government of the Province of Quebec, in North America, and to make further Provision for the Government of the said Province, and by the Authority of the same, that from and after the passing of this Act, the said Provision contained in the said Act of the Fourteenth Year of his present Majesty, be and the same is hereby repealed, and the Authority of the said Laws of Canada, and every part thereof, as forming a Rule of Decision in all matters of Controversy relative to Property and Civil Rights, shall be annulled, made void, and abolished throughout this Province; and that the said Laws, nor any part thereof, as such, shall be of any force or authority within the said Province, nor binding on any of the Inhabitants thereof.

A II.

XIV. Provided always, that no Licence shall be granted for retailing any Spirituous Liquors, within any of the said Gaols or Prisons, and if any Gaoler, Keeper or Officer of any Gaol or Prison shall sell, use, lend, or give away, or knowingly permit, or suffer any Spirituous Liquors or Strong Water, to be sold, used, lent, or given away in such Gaol or Prison, or brought into the same, other than except such Spirituous Liquors or Strong Waters, as shall be prescribed or given by the prescription and direction of a regular Physician, Surgeon or Apothecary; every such Gaoler, Keeper or other Officer, shall for every such offence forfeit and lose the sum of Twenty-Pounds Current Money of this Province, one moiety thereof to his Majesty his Heirs and Successors for the Public uses of the said Province, and the support of the Government thereof, and the other moiety of the said sum with full costs of suit to the person or persons as will sue for the same in any of his Majesty's Courts of Record in this Province by action of debt, bill, plaint or information, and in case any such Gaoler or other Officer being convicted thereof as aforesaid, shall again offend in like manner, and be thereof a second time lawfully convicted, such second offence shall be deemed a forfeiture of his Office.

XV. Provided also, that it shall and may be lawful for the said Justices at their Quarter Sessions assembled as aforesaid or the greater part of them, to frame and draw up such Rules and Regulations to be observed and obeyed within the said Gaol, respectively as to them shall seem most proper and convenient, which having received the approbation and signature of one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, shall be binding on the Gaoler and Prisoners.

XVI. And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that it shall and may be lawful for the said Justices within the respective limits of their Commissions, assembled as aforesaid, or the greater part of them, and they are hereby Authorized and empowered, to ascertain and appoint a reasonable Yearly Salary according to their discretion to be paid to the Gaoler, and that the said Salary shall be in place of all Fees, perquisites or Impositions of any sort or kind whatever, and that it shall not be lawful for the said Gaoler or Officer belonging to the said Gaol, to demand or receive any fee, perquisite or other payment from any Prisoner who may be confined within any of the said Gaols or Prisons.

FINIS.

NEWARK: Printed by Louis Roy, 1793

reprinted from American and British papers. Bushell was in constant economic difficulties, perhaps because of his excessive drinking, but his printing establishment survived.

The paper's loyalty to the government was insured by the fact that it was under the close supervision of the Provincial Secretary, Robert Bulkeley, who soon took over as editor, leaving the printing to Bushell. In 1758 Anthony Henry joined the firm. When Bushell died three years later, Henry was completely managing the business.

In November 1765, however, Henry was suddenly in trouble. His new apprentice, Isaiah Thomas, audaciously published a paragraph containing scarcely veiled suggestions that Nova Scotians were opposed to the Stamp Act, the colonial taxing measure which aroused the ire of all American colonists. When an edition of the paper came out on stock which did not have the required stamps, officials were outraged. Thomas fled back home to Massachusetts. Henry protested his innocence. The government withdrew its patronage. The *Gazette* closed down.

A new, quasi-official paper, the *Nova Scotia Gazette*, was begun under the guidance of Robert Fletcher. Henry responded by issuing the *Nova Scotia Chronicle and Weekly Advertiser* in 1769. It was Canada's first truly independent newspaper. It must have had private underwriters, for it contained little advertising.

The competition put Fletcher out of business. Henry thereupon traded his independence for a steady income. He was the only skilled printer left in town, but the government contracted for most of the business. Henry found his way back into the good graces of the administration, renaming his paper the *Nova Scotia Gazette and the Weekly Chronicle*. In 1788 he was formally commissioned "King's Printer." He confirmed his re-established loyalty by changing his paper's name to the *Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*. Henry's enterprise flourished – he had learned the value of avoiding all controversy.

Meanwhile in Quebec, two more American printers, (Scottish-born) William Brown and (possibly Irish-born) Thomas Gilmore had arrived. In 1764 they created, with government sponsorship, the *Quebec Gazette/La Gazette de Québec*. From the beginning the paper was bilingual, but the partners had difficulty with translations and with employing suitable staff. The business struggled with limited success. In 1772, at age 32, Gilmore died an alcoholic – drink was the curse of the printing class.

NOVA-SCOTIA. No. 1.

THE

Halifax GAZETTE.

MONDAY, March 23, 1752.

FOREIGN ADVICES

ROME, September 14.

FROM THE BRITISH PRINTS

LONDON, September 18.

The first Canadian newspaper, Bushell's "Halifax Gazette", 1762.

The *Gazette*, like its counterparts, was filled with official announcements and advertisements, but its printers had loftier aspirations for their journal. They wanted their new paper to be "the most effectual Means of bringing about a thorough Knowledge of the English and French language to those of the two Nations now happily united in one in this Part of the World." The editors promised to publish foreign news with "impartiality" and "such Originals, both in Prose and Verse, as will please the FANCY and instruct the Judgment." Further, and more daringly, they declared the paper would "have nothing so much at heart, as the support of VIRTUE and MORALITY, and the noble cause of LIBERTY." Such ideas could be dangerous.

For a time the *Gazette* enjoyed some degree of freedom, but only for a time. In that period immediately prior to the American Revolution, Quebec readers welcomed a paper with news both of British government policies and of colonial reactions. However, the infamous stamp tax forced the *Gazette* to suspend publication for several months until the tax was rescinded. When the paper started up again in 1766, it was under careful administration scrutiny. Much as the editors

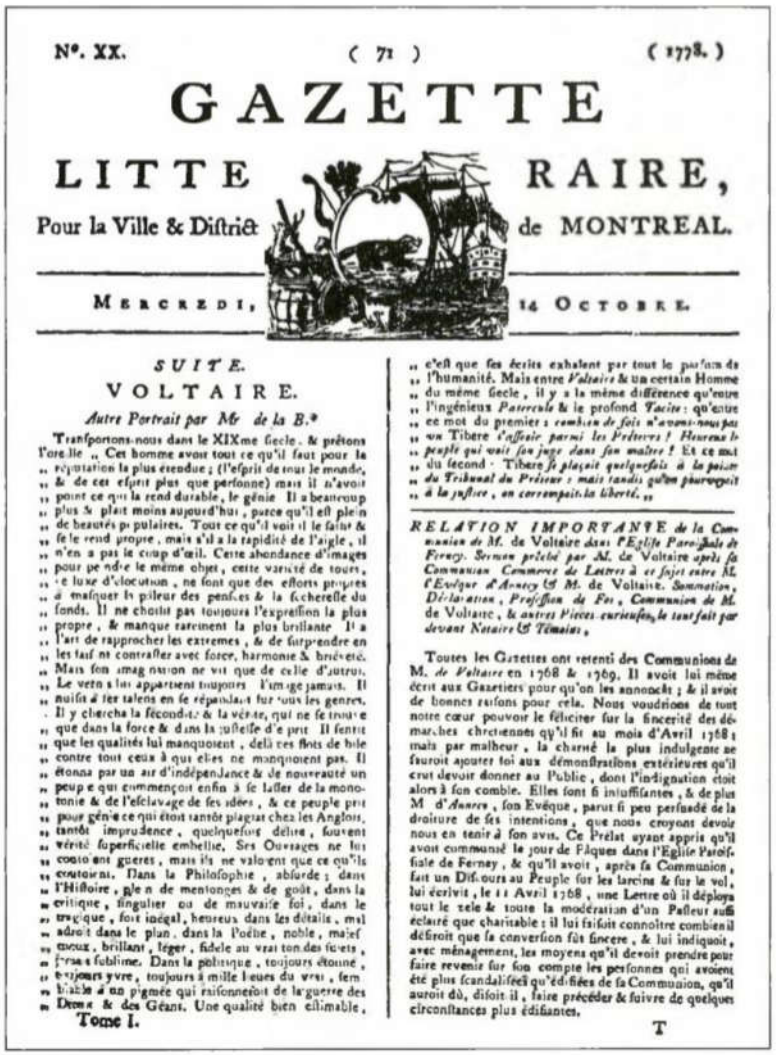
resolved to publish "free from the Inspection or Restrictions," by 1770 a strict form of censorship was instigated.

The American invasion of Canada in 1775 stopped the *Gazette* presses altogether. Regular publication was not resumed until a month after the Declaration of Independence, by which time the Americans had all left the country. Notwithstanding his earlier protestations in defence of liberty, Brown righteously reassured his readers that he had no sympathy for the Revolution. He declared that his paper "merited the Title of THE MOST INNOCENT GAZETTE IN THE BRITISH DOMINIONS." From then on Brown completely understood which side of all Canadian bread was government-buttered.

If the first Halifax and Quebec printers were sometimes suspect, they were nothing compared to the first to set up shop in Montreal. The press came to Montreal a creature of the government, the American revolutionary government!

By the winter of 1776, the occupying American army recognized its need of a printer who might arouse the sympathies of the French populace. Fleury Mesplet, a French printer living in Philadelphia, was their man. Sponsored by Benjamin Franklin, bearing a borrowed press, type, paper, and a commission from the Continental Congress, Mesplet arrived in May. In June the American venture collapsed and the invading army withdrew. The abandoned printer was imprisoned, but three weeks later he was released.

The front page of Mesplet's "Montreal Gazette" as it appeared in its first year, 1778.



N°. XX. (71) (1778.)

GAZETTE

LITTE RAIRE,

Pour la Ville & Diſtrict de MONTREAL.

MERCREDI, 14 OCTOBRE.

SUITE.

VOLTAIRE.

Autre Portrait par Mr de la B.

Tranſportons-nous dans le XIXme ſiecle, & prêtons l'oreille „ Cet homme avoit tout ce qu'il faut pour la „ réputation la plus étendue ; (l'eſprit de tout le monde, „ & de ces eſprits plus que perſonne) mais il n'avoit „ point ce qui la rend durable, le génie Il a beaucoup „ plus & plaît moins aujourd'hui, parce qu'il eſt plein „ de beautés particulaires. Tout ce qu'il voit il le ſaiſit & „ le rend propre, mais s'il a la rapidité de l'aigle, il „ n'en a pas le coup d'œil. Cette abondance d'images „ pour peindre le même objet, cette variété de tours, „ ce luxe d'élocution, ne ſont que des efforts propres „ à maſquer la pâleur des penſées & la ſéchereſſe du „ fonds. Il ne choiſit pas toujours l'expreſſion la plus „ propre, & manque rarement la plus brillante Il a „ l'art de rapprocher les extrêmes, & de ſurprendre en „ les faiſant contraſter avec force, harmonie & brièveté. „ Mais ſon imagination ne vit que de celle d'autrui. „ Le vêtement lui appartient toujours l'image jamais. Il „ auroit pû ſe rendre célebre en ſe répandant ſur tous les genres. „ Il y chercha la fécondité & la vérité, qui ne ſe trouve „ que dans la force & dans la juſteſſe d'eſprit Il ſentit „ que les qualités lui manquoient, delà ces flots de bile „ contre tout ceux à qui elles ne manquoient pas. Il „ étonna par un air d'indépendance & de nouveauté un „ peuple qui commençoit enfin à ſe laſſer de la monotonie & de l'eſclavage de ſes idées, & ce peuple prit „ pour génie ce qui étoit tantôt plagiat chez les Anglois, „ tantôt imprudence, quelquefois délire, ſouvent „ vérité ſuperficielle embellie. Ses Ouvrages ne lui „ coûtoient gueres, mais ils ne valoient que ce qu'ils „ coûtoient. Dans la Philoſophie, abſurde ; dans „ l'Hiſtoire, plein de menſonges & de goût, dans la „ critique, ſingulier ou de mauvaiſe foi, dans le „ tragique, ſoit inégal, heureux dans les détails, mal „ adroit dans le plan, dans la Poëſie, noble, maſſif „ ſouvent, brillant, léger, fidele au vrai tantôt faux, „ froid & ſublime. Dans la politique, toujours étourdi, „ toujours yvre, toujours à mille lieues du vrai, ſemblable à un pigmée qui raiſonneroit de la guerre des „ Dieux & des Géans. Une qualité bien eſtimable,

Tome I.

„ c'eſt que ſes écrits exhalent par tout le parfum de „ l'humanité. Mais entre *Voltaire* & un certain Homme „ du même ſiecle, il y a la même différence qu'entre „ l'ingénieux *Pattrcule* & le profond *Tacite* : qu'entre „ ce mot du premier : *combien de fois n'avons-nous pas* „ un Tibere *l'aſſeoir parmi les Peres* ! *Heureux le* „ *peuple qui voit ſon juge dans ſon maître* ! Et ce mot „ du ſecond : *Tibere ſe plaiſoit quelquefois à la peine* „ *du Tribunal du Préteur : mais tandis qu'on pourvoyoit* „ *à la juſtice, on corrompoit la liberté.* „

RELATION IMPORTANTE de la Communion de M. de Voltaire dans l'Egliſe Paroiſſiale de Ferney. Sermon prêché par M. de Voltaire après ſa Communion. Commerce de Lettres à ce ſujet entre M. l'Evêque d'Annecy & M. de Voltaire. Sommation, Déclaration, Profeſſion de Foi, Communion de M. de Voltaire, & autres Pieces curieuſes, le tout fait par devant Notaire & Témoins,

Toutes les Gazettes ont retenti des Communions de M. *de Voltaire* en 1768 & 1769. Il avoit lui même écrit aux Gazetiers pour qu'on les annonçât ; & il avoit de bonnes raiſons pour cela. Nous voudrions de tout notre cœur pouvoir le féliciter ſur la ſincerité des démarches chrétiennes qu'il fit au mois d'Avril 1768 ; mais par malheur, la charité la plus indulgente ne ſauroit ajouter foi aux démonſtrations extérieures qu'il crut devoir donner au Public, dont l'indignation étoit alors à ſon comble. Elles ſont ſi inſuffiſantes, & de plus M. d'*Annecy*, ſon Evêque, parut ſi peu perſuadé de la droiture de ſes intentions, que nous croyons devoir nous en tenir à ſon avis. Ce Prélat ayant appris qu'il avoit communié le jour de Pâques dans l'Egliſe Paroiſſiale de Ferney, & qu'il avoit, après ſa Communion, fait un Diſcours au Peuple ſur les larcins & ſur le vol, lui écrivit, le 11 Avril 1768, une Lettre où il déploya tout le zele & toute la modération d'un Paſteur auſſi éclairé que charitable ; il lui faiſoit connoître combien il déſiroit que la converſion fût ſincere, & lui indiquoit, avec ménagement, les moyens qu'il devoit prendre pour faire revenir ſur ſon compte les perſonnes qui avoient été plus ſcandaliſées qu'édifiées de ſa Communion, qu'il auroit dû, diſoit il, faire précéder & ſuivre de quelques circonſtances plus édifiantes.

T

If Mesplet set up shop and began job printing. Not until June 1778 did he risk publishing *La Gazette du commerce et littéraire, pour la ville et district de Montréal*, Canada's first fully French-language newspaper, with Valentin Jutard as editor. Mesplet avoided criticism of both church and government, but the radical ideas of Jutard – an admirer of Voltaire – made the paper suspect. In June 1779, both men were arrested and the *Gazette littéraire* died. Mesplet was allowed to return to his printing business. Often in financial straits, eventually he sold out, and then turned around and rented his equipment back again. He was the only competent printer in town. In 1785, he started up a new newspaper, this one bilingual, the *Montreal Gazette/La Gazette de Montréal.*

Mesplet's *Gazette*, despite its name, was anything but an official organ. Often critical of the clergy, it sought to apply the ideals of the French Revolution to the political situation of Quebec. When France and Great Britain went to war in 1793, all such seditious ideas were suppressed. The *Gazette* abruptly altered its views and continued publication (it continues today), but within a few months Mesplet was dead – bowed and bankrupt, but not broken.

By this time, the new province of New Brunswick, with its new Loyalist settlers and its new government, had its own newspaper. Two Americans who had already put out a Loyalist paper in New York, William Lewis and John Ryan, had come to Saint John bringing their press and types with them. On 12 December 1783 they began the *Royal St. John's Gazette and Nova-Scotia*

Intelligencer, advertising themselves as "Printers to His Majesty's Loyal Settlement."

Lewis and Ryan soon took up the cause of airing the grievances of the Loyalist settlers, using the *Gazette* to publicize dissatisfactions with the colonial government. Lewis was especially outspoken in denouncing the favouritism and incompetence of local officials, demanding a "second Spanish Inquisition" to expose land agents. The two printers were indicted for libel. But officials needed the Lewis and Ryan printing establishment – there was no competition. The libel action was not pursued.

By 1785, however, the authorities had had enough. They imported – again from the United States – a more-truly-blue Loyalist printer, Christopher Sower. Appointed postmaster as well as King's Printer, Sower began the *Royal Gazette and the New Brunswick Advertiser*.

Lewis and Ryan changed their paper to the *Saint John Gazette and Weekly Advertiser* and stayed in business. They became even more energetic in their opposition to government practices, successfully defeating administration candidates in local elections. Governor Thomas Carleton responded by overturning the elections and arresting his critics, including Lewis and Ryan. In May 1786, the two printers pleaded guilty to charges of criminal libel and paid fines of £20 each. Their partnership dissolved. Lewis, perhaps the more radical of the two, departed the province.

New Brunswick was not big enough for two newspapers. Ryan eventually dampened his democratic – or at least anti-government – sentiments, came to terms with the government and settled all disputes with Sower. When the latter's declining fortunes and ill health prompted his return to the United States, Ryan assumed the post of King's Printer. Once again economic security triumphed over journalistic liberty.

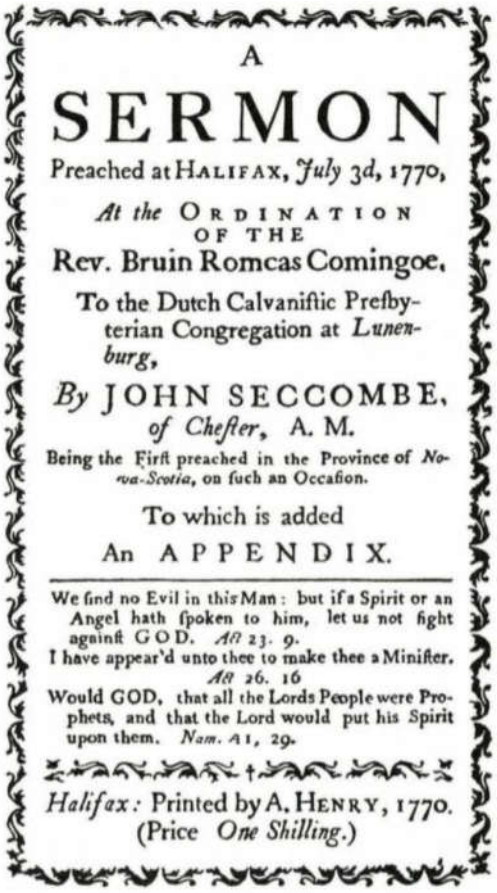
Indeed, in 1806, Ryan went to Newfoundland to establish the first newspaper there. The motto of his new journal was, "Fear God: Honour the King." Its prospectus promised the paper would never "offend the Ear of delicacy or distress the heart of Sensibility," and would "never be occupied by party controversy." He posted a £200 bond, assuring that he would never "insert in said Paper any matter which ... in the opinion of the Governor ... may tend to disturb the peace of His Majesty's Subjects." A year later, he pledged not to publish "any Paragraph or Extracts from other papers, which indicated any thing inflammatory against the Government of Great Britain or its dependencies, or any paragraph which may tend to sow dissension among the inhabitants of this Island."

The first King's Printer in Upper Canada was not an American, but Louis Roy had learned his trade in Montreal under Fleury Mesplet's tutelage, so his political loyalties were suspect. He came to the new province complete with a second-hand wooden press. (Today it is at the Mackenzie Printery Museum in Queenston, Ontario.)

The Upper Canada Gazette or American Oracle, as it was resoundingly titled, was launched on 18 April 1793. Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe's intent to govern his province by strict principles is indicated by the Proclamation which dominated the front page:

> Whereas it is the indispensable duty of all People ... to preserve and advance the Honour and Service of Almighty God; and to discourage and suppress all Vice, Profaneness and Immorality ... His Majesty ... for the promotion of Virtue and in tenderness to the best interests of His Subjects, [has] given command for causing all Laws made against Blasphemy, Profaneness, Adultery, Fornication, Polygamy, Incest, Profanation of the Lords Day, Swearing and Drunkenness, to be strictly put in execution in every part of the Province.

In contrast, on the back page, Roy promised to make "every exertion he is master of, so as to render the paper useful, entertaining, and instructive." His



A

SERMON

Preached at HALIFAX, *July* 3*d*, 1770,

At the ORDINATION OF THE

Rev. Bruin Romcas Comingoe,

To the Dutch Calvaniſtic Preſbyterian Congregation at *Lunenburg*,

By JOHN SECCOMBE,

of Cheſter, A. M.

Being the Firſt preached in the Province of *Nova-Scotia*, on ſuch an Occaſion.

To which is added

An APPENDIX.

We find no Evil in this Man: but if a Spirit or an Angel hath ſpoken to him, let us not fight againſt GOD. *Act* 23. 9.

I have appear'd unto thee to make thee a Miniſter. *Act* 26. 16

Would GOD, that all the Lords People were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them. *Num.* 11, 29.

Halifax: Printed by A. HENRY, 1770.

(Price *One Shilling*.)

Cover of ordination sermon, printed at Halifax, 1770, by Anthony Henry.

vision for his new venture was for it to become "the Vehicle of Intelligence in this growing Province, of whatever may intend to its internal benefit and common advantage." The printer realized, as perhaps Simcoe did not, that for the new newspaper to survive, it must be more than a government voice. It must also serve the public at large.

Determining what was and what was not of "internal benefit and common advantage" proved to be no easy task. Roy soon found himself pulled in opposite directions.

The editor's employers were British officials, with their minds set strictly on their task of administering a British colony. They were responsible to the British Crown. The *Gazette* was their means for propagating their propaganda – their proclamations, regulations and notices. These administrators were in Canada not for life, but to make a living. They expected to make their fortunes – the top positions were indeed well paid – and to leave. Their interests, their hearts, their homes were essentially English – news to them was British news.

Roy's readers, however, had nearly all come to Upper Canada from the United States. Many were Loyalists who had come for the safety and rewards of remaining under the British crown. Others had come for economic and personal reasons, lured to the north by opportunities for a fresh start on good land at low cost. All were settlers – they expected to live out their lives in Upper Canada. All were also Americans in outlook and experience – they had relatives and friends back in the United States. For them, American events and politics were of more interest and, undoubtedly, exercised more influence.

The first issue of Upper Canada's first newspaper, printed at Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake) by Louis Roy in 1793.

NUMBER 1. G. R. VOLUME I.

UPPER CANADA GAZETTE,

OR

AMERICAN ORACLE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 1793.

JOHN GRAVES SIMCOE.

PROCLAMATION

For the suppression of Vice, Profaneness & Immorality.

JOHN GRAVES SIMCOE, Esquire,

Lieutenant Governor & Colonel Commanding His Majesty's Forces, and Province of Upper Canada.

WHEREAS it is the indispensable duty of all People, and more especially of all Christian Nations, to profess and shew the honour and Service of Almighty God; and to discourage and suppress all Vice, Profaneness and Immorality, which if continually permitted may justly draw down the Divine Vengeance upon Us and our Country: And Whereas by having for the promotion of Virtue, and in order to the full intention of His Majesty's Royal Proclamation for regulating all Laws made and to be made by the Provincial Legislature in Alchemy, Fornication, Polygamy, Incest, Profanation of the Lord's Day, Swearing and Drunkenness, to be strictly put in Execution in every part of the Province, I do therefore direct, require and command the Justices of the Peace and Coroners of the several Towns and Townships, to make presentment upon Oath, of any of the Vices aforesaid, to the Justices of the Peace in their Sessions, or to any of the other temporal Courts: And for the more effectual proceeding thereon, all Judges, Justices and Magistrates and all other officers concerned for putting the Laws against Crimes and Offences into execution, are directed and commanded to exert themselves, for the due prosecution and punishment of all persons, who shall presume to offend in any of the kinds aforesaid; and also of all persons that, contrary to their duty, shall be remiss or negligent in putting the said Laws in execution. And I do further charge and command, that this Proclamation be publickly read to all Courts of Justice, on the first day of every Session to be held in the course of the present year, and more especially in such of His Majesty's Courts, as have the Cognizance of Crimes and Offences, recommending the same, to all Christian Ministers of every denomination, to cause the same Proclamation to be read four times in the said year, immediately after Divine Service, in all places of Public Worship, and that they do their utmost Endeavour, to incite their respective Auditors to the practice of Piety and Virtue, and the avoiding of every thing, contrary to the pure Morality of the Religion of the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Given under my Hand and Seal at Arms at the Government House, Navy Hall, the Eleventh day of April, in the Year of our Lord One thousand seven Hundred and Ninety-three, and in the Thirty-third Year of His Majesty's Reign.

J. G. S.

By His Excellency's Command,
WM. JARVIS, Secretary.

THE KING'S SPEECH

TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

December 13, 1792.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

HAVING judged it necessary to embody a part of the militia of this Kingdom, I have in pursuance of the provisions of the law, called you together within the time limited for that purpose, it is an every account, I am satisfied or to you to meet you in Parliament at this conjuncture. I would have been happy if I could have announced to you the secure and undisturbed continuance of all the blessings which my subjects have derived from a state of tranquility; but events have recently occurred which require our united vigilance and exertion in order to preserve the advantages which we have hitherto enjoyed.

The seditious practices which have been in a great measure checked by your firm and explicit declaration in the last session, and by the general concurrence of my people in the same sentiments, have of late been more openly renewed, and with increased activity. A spirit of tumult and disorder (the natural consequence of such practices) has shewn itself in acts of riot and insurrection, which required the interposition of a military force in support of the Civil Magistrate. The industry employed to excite discontent on various pretexts and in different parts of the kingdom has appeared to proceed from a design to attempt the destruction of our happy constitution, and the subversion of all order and government; and this design has evidently been pursued in connection and concert with persons in foreign countries.

I have carefully observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the continent, and have uniformly obtained from any interference with respect to the internal affairs of France, but it is impossible for me to see, without the most serious uneasiness, the strong and increasing indications which have appeared there of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt new systems of government, equally incompatible with the security of the internal happiness of every country.

I have taken such measures as I judge proper, in consequence of these circumstances, for calling out the force of the militia, and for making such augmentations of my naval and military force, as may be necessary for the purpose of maintaining the honour of my crown and the interests of my people during the present conjuncture, and I rely with confidence on your zeal and public spirit for enabling me to make good the engagements into which I have entered for the purpose of supporting the system of Europe, and particularly the barrier of the United Provinces, which is essential to the security of the dominions of my crown, and to the tranquility of my people.

I am persuaded that these exertions are necessary in the present state of affairs, and are well calculated both to maintain internal tranquility, and to procure a firm and temperate conduct afterwards for preserving the blessings of peace.

Nothing will be neglected on my part that can contribute to that important object, consistently with the security of my kingdoms, and with the faithful performance of engagements which we are bound equally by interest and honour to fulfil.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I have ordered the estimates of the ensuing year to be laid before you, and I rely on your zeal and affection to the public service for making such provision as may be necessary for the several branches of the establishment.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I have ordered the papers relative to the negotiations which have taken place between this country and France to be laid before you, and I am persuaded that you will see in the conduct of the latter, the strongest reasons for the measures which I have adopted.

It is a great satisfaction to me to find that the commercial treaty with Russia has been brought to a conclusion, and that the ratifications have been exchanged.

I have ordered the treaty of commerce with Portugal to be laid before you, and I am persuaded that you will see with pleasure the advantages which have been obtained for the trade of my subjects

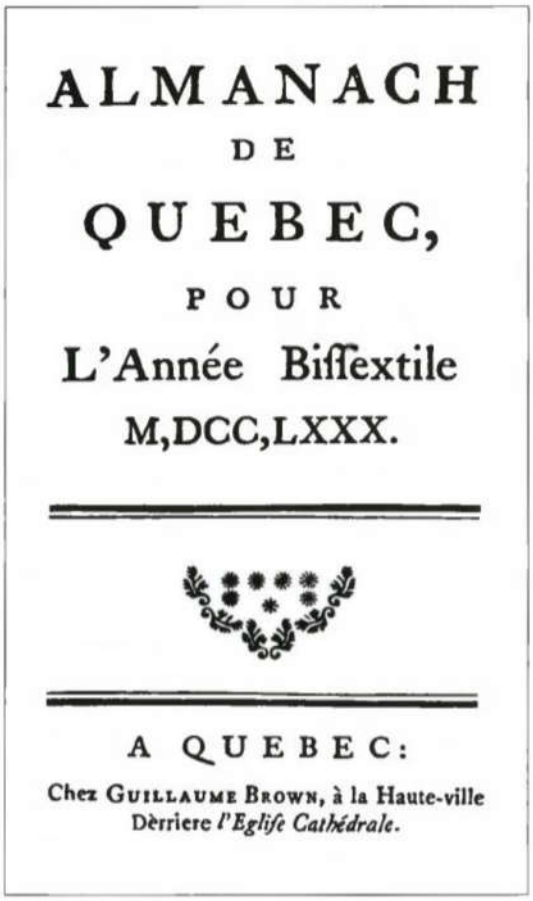
Part of the problem was Roy's illness, as Osgoode acknowledged. "Till now the printer has been confined by the Fevere; but he cannot work without a stove and an Assistant. He has been worn down with sickness: therefore I cannot say anything harsh to him, but at times I am induced to think he is very indifferent about his business."

Newark (now Niagara-on-the-Lake), the interim provincial capital, was anything but a printer's paradise. It was little more a trading post and military outpost. Most of the inhabitants, British regular soldiers, were illiterate. Most officials were occupied in competing for influence and applying for grants of land which might eventually make them wealthy. Roy felt isolated and overworked. By the end of the next summer, he departed. Whether he jumped or was pushed is not clear.

Roy limped back to Montreal. Finding that he could not take over Mesplet's operation, he established his own press. For a brief time the city had two competing newspapers, each called the *Gazette*. However, the climate – political and economic – was not hospitable and Roy moved on to New York where he died in 1799. A published obituary confirmed doubts Canadian authorities had held about him: "His political principles were those of a Republican; and he laboured until his last fatal illness with all the zeal which the most ardent patriotism could inspire to promote the interest of Freedom's sacred cause."

Roy's successor fared little better. Imported from the United States, twenty-year-old Gideon Tiffany was given explicit instructions that the *Gazette* was "to improve by degrees and to establish a character." In determining what news to print, the printer/editor was told to use his "own good sense and discretion," and to prefer that "which is most favourable to the British Government." As long as he acted "uprightly and industriously," he would be "met with His Excellency's support. ... You must be the architect of your own fortune, and the best preserver of your own character." Those who paid the printer were determined to set the tone.

Gideon Tiffany largely ignored these admonitions. He put out his paper in his own Yankee way. After he was joined by his older and more experienced brother, Silvester, even more American news filled its columns.


ALMANACH
DE
QUEBEC,
POUR
L'Année Biſſextile
M,DCC,LXXX.
A QUEBEC:
Chez GUILLAUME BROWN, à la Haute-ville
Dèrriere *l'Egliſe Cathédrale.*

The cover of the first issue of the "Almanach de Quebec", published in 1780.

When the printers bought supplies of paper from New York sources, they were severely reprimanded. "In future, you must procure paper from Montreal, as you will not be permitted to get it from the United States. ... Your remaining at Niagara is precarious." Cross-border shopping, for supplies or ideas, was forbidden.

Early in 1797, Gideon was in serious difficulty. Despite reminders in the paper, many subscribers were delinquent in their payments. Worse, the government was slow and contentious about paying both his regular allowance (£75 a year) and a number of bills which it owed him. Simcoe had by this time left the province, and administrator Peter Russell was in no mood to help his printer.

And there was something much worse. Perhaps Gideon Tiffany had never read Simcoe's first *Gazette* proclamation, for in April of 1797 the printer was in very bad trouble. He was charged with blasphemy and violating a law going back to William III. To write, print or teach anything denying the doctrine of the Trinity, the truth of the Christian Religion, or the authority of Holy Scripture, was considered a crime "greatly tending to the Dishonour of Almighty God" as well as "destructive to the Peace and Welfare of this Kingdom." It is not known precisely what writing by Gideon prompted this prosecution – the surviving trial record is incomplete.

Gideon resigned his post as King's Printer. Two weeks later he was sentenced "to be fined ... twenty pounds to the King and to be confined for one calendar month in his Majesty's gaol of Newark and to remain in confinement till the fine is paid,

and afterwards to find security for his good behaviour for three years, himself in one hundred pounds, and two sureties of fifty pounds each."

Disloyalty and blasphemy – the printers' proclivities were very clear, at least to their critics. To quell the growing dissatisfaction, a new *Gazette* editor was appointed, Titus Geer Simons. He was a local lad and a loyal one.

There was only one problem: he knew nothing about printing – he had no training in the trade. He employed the Tiffany brothers to continue setting types and working the press–and they continued to exercise an influence.

Chief Justice John Elmsley fumed about "unprincipled and unattached republicans." Early in 1798 he formally registered his concern: "Pray is there no possibility of having another Printer? Tho' Simons's name is used, the Tiffanys are the real managers." A recent speech made by King George, "the finest thing in Modern History, & which ought to be circulated in all his Dominions, & got by heart by all his Subjects, has never made its appearance; while every trifle relating to the damn'd States is printed in large character."

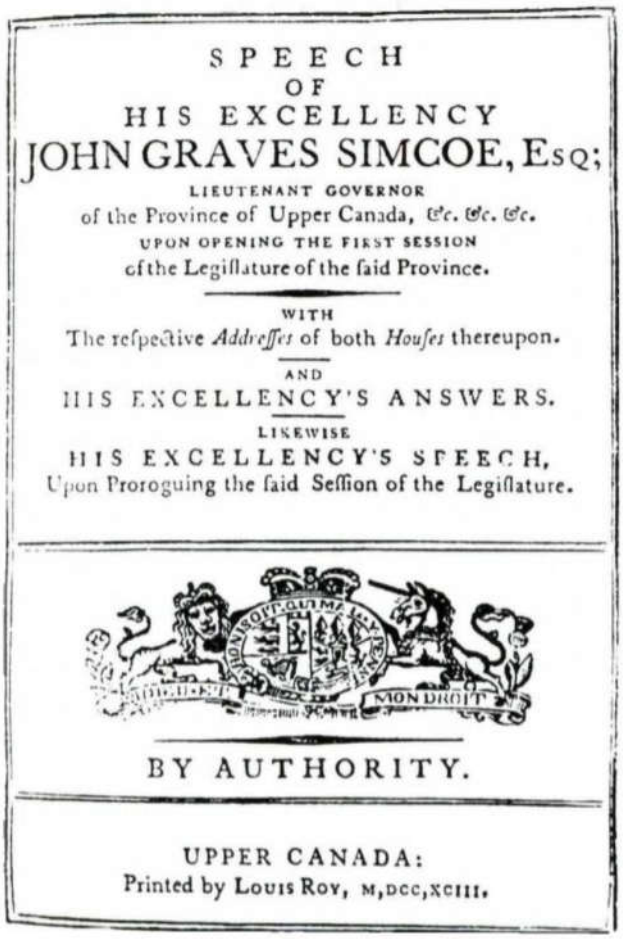
Not long thereafter, Silvester Tiffany was threatened with prosecution for some unnamed "treasonable or seditious conduct." He wrote defending himself, "It is a charge ungenerous and unfounded, and to which my God can bear the clearest testimony of my innocency. I never had a tho't of the kind, even in my most trying moments."

The exact nature of the charge is unknown, but it is known that he had privately threatened to expose the Provincial Administrator, Peter Russell, to hold him "up by one leg to public shame." An informant told Russell that "Tiffany says you charged the public with the expense of advertising for a Negro Wench. – Therefore Tiffany means to say, it is not fair wenching." Whether the supposed sin was abuse of a public trust or abuse of a woman slave is not clear.

What is clear is that Tiffany saw his duty, not as following the wishes of the province's chief administrator, but as serving a higher order. The printer claimed that his first allegiance was to the people, not to the government. "As the people's printer, it is my duty to devote my head, heart and hands to their service. ... The interests of the King and people are inseparable."

There was no official response. Simons was simply instructed to find another printer.

Silvester Tiffany eventually returned to the United States where he died in 1811. Gideon Tiffany gave up printing but remained in Upper Canada and became a leading citizen of Delaware township. In 1838 he was accused of fomenting discontent, attempting to recruit support for the 1837 Rebellion. The charge did not stick, but there was enough evidence to indicate that the old fears about his seditious inclinations were not entirely unfounded. ◆



SPEECH
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY
JOHN GRAVES SIMCOE, Esq;
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
of the Province of Upper Canada, &c. &c. &c.
UPON OPENING THE FIRST SESSION
of the Legiſlature of the ſaid Province.

WITH
The reſpective *Addreſſes* of both *Houſes* thereupon.
AND
HIS EXCELLENCY'S ANSWERS.
LIKEWISE
HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH,
Upon Proroguing the ſaid Seſſion of the Legiſlature.

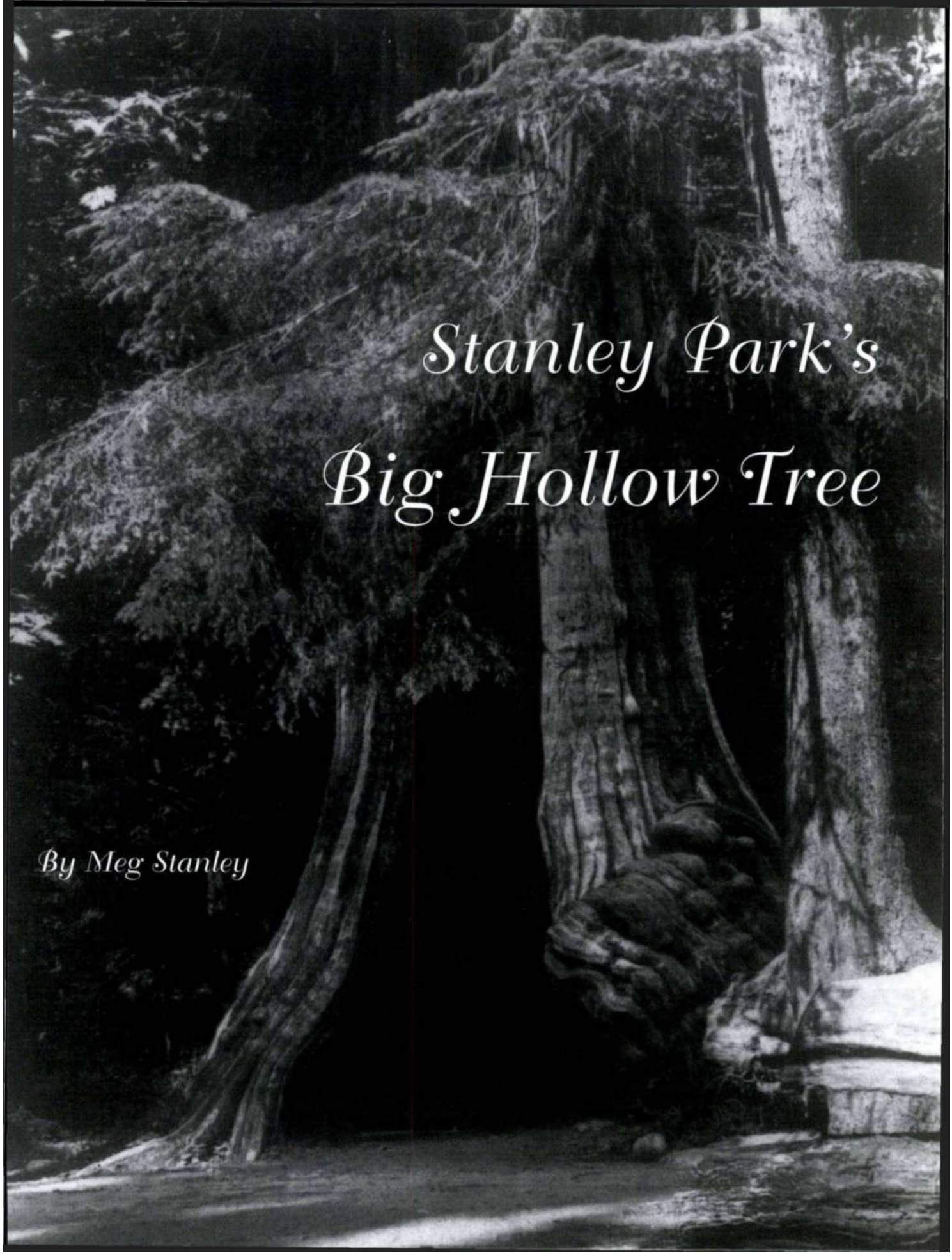
BY AUTHORITY.

UPPER CANADA:
Printed by Louis Roy, M,DCC,XCIII.

Proceedings of the Upper Canada legislature as recorded by Louis Roy.

Chris Raible is the author of "Muddy York Mud: Scandal and Scurrility in Upper Canada" and is a regular contributor to "The Beaver".

The author is indebted to entries on each of the King's Printers in volumes of "The Dictionary of Canadian Biography" for many of the details in this article.


Stanley Park's
Big Hollow Tree
By Meg Stanley

The "Big Hollow Tree" in Vancouver's Stanley Park has survived more than 100 years of fame as one of the City's landmarks. Located just off of the main park road near Siwash Rock, the tree has been on the itinerary of tourists since the road opened in 1889. As Major Matthews, the City Archivist, told the Parks Board in 1965, "To come to Vancouver and not see 'The Big Hollow Tree' was like eating an egg without salt."

For many years, there was an "official" photographer stationed at the tree to capture the tourists' stop for posterity. As a result, there is an abundance of photographs of the tree and its visitors dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. City records show that photographers George Schenck, George C. Fricke, and G.A. King of "The Camera Workers" held the lease on the photograph concession at the "Big Tree" from 1908 until 1915. Frank Gowan obtained the concession in 1916 after the park authorities cancelled the lease of the "Camera Workers" at the urging of the police. Evidently, "conversations at the big tree since the outbreak of the war were distasteful to British ears and could no longer be tolerated." One of the "German photographers" was a British subject, but Canada was in the process of identifying and interning "enemy aliens" in 1915 and individuals with German surnames were subjected to harassment regardless of their official status.

City of Vancouver Archives

Mr. and Mrs. Luigi Trasolini, with children, Norman and Tosca, circa 1910.

Gowan obtained the exclusive right to take and sell photographs at "(1) The 'Big Tree' off the Main Driveway, (2) the 'Seven Sisters' and the Big Cedar Tree on Tatlow Walk, (3) Prospect Point and (4) Brockton Point". In return, he agreed to be in attendance at the "Big Tree" at "all reasonable times and hours of the year when the weather conditions are favourable." He also obtained use of a small building erected at the site.

This photographer found the concession less rewarding than his predecessors had. In 1908, the first year Schenck, Fricke, and King held the lease, they were able to pay the park authorities $750; nine years later, Gowan was willing to offer $50. The decline in business was not because people had lost interest in having their photograph taken, but was, in a cruel twist, a product of the popularity of photography generally. An increasing number of people owned their own Kodak and took their own snapshots at the tree. Gowan tried to make up for the declining business by selling general views of Stanley Park, and by serving as a "guide, philosopher, and friend" to visitors. This strategy must have been at least partially successful since Gowan continued to renew his lease until 1941.

What drew people to the tree? Was it the fulfillment of a long-harboured ambition instilled, as one newspaper article published in 1941 suggested, by photographs of the huge tree glimpsed in school books? Certainly, the size of the tree made a strong impression. The circumference, which reaches 80 feet in the most generous descriptions, awed many. A groove was reportedly worn into the bole by the measuring tapes visitors used to establish its girth for themselves.

If size fascinated, so too did age. Here was an ancient survivor, Vancouver's Stonehenge, that commanded respect and inspired the reflective to contemplate the comparatively brief lifespan of humans. In a new city with "no history", the tree, estimated to be 800–1,000 years old, offered a link to the local past that only native visitors could match. One writer went so far as to speculate that, "The Big Tree may have flourished before a human voice disturbed the silence of the Park, or before a human foot left its impress upon the ground near where it stands."

Ultimately, it was the tree's hollowness that fascinated. Here, visitors could not only pause and wonder at the magnificence of nature, they could enter into its womb-like interior. Perhaps this contributed to the tree's popularity as a lovers' trysting spot. On a more prosaic note, one writer boasted of having managed to squeeze close to 40 people into the tree for a lecture on ferns. There was, he reported, barely enough room to pass the hat at the close.

For most, nature alone was not sufficiently interesting to justify a photograph. It had to be made useful, by providing a backdrop for humans, and improved upon, by the addition of embellishments. By the 1920s, the latter included grottos, ferns, a ladder, and a low fence.

People especially liked to have a photograph taken of themselves in a vehicle which was parked beside or inside the tree. With the advent of the automobile, it was

Opposite: The earliest known photograph of the "Big Tree", probably taken about 1889.

here that nature and machine met with the scene saved for posterity by the camera. At a time when cars were still novelties, these photographs must have been particularly amusing; the huge, hollow, freak of nature exhibited with the newest freak of the machine age.

City of Vancouver Archives

"Stanley Park Hotel ... drinks and cigars 2 bits": fun in the park, early 1890s.

The "Hollow Tree" was not, in fact, a freak. Foresters' reports prepared between 1913 and 1918 on the condition of Stanley Park's trees noted that the western red cedar is a common species on the West Coast and is "very generally 'stagheaded' and hollow-hearted." The foresters made two specific recommendations for the management of these hollow trees with dead tops. First, they suggested that the "stag", or dead-heads be cut so as to reduce the risk of their being blown down in heavy winds and to improve the appearance of the trees. Finally, they proposed that concrete be used to fill the hollow cavities so as to extend the life of the trees.

The idea of using a relatively new material, concrete, to "repair" ancient trees is another example of humans improving upon nature. For obvious reasons, however, the cavity of the "Big Hollow Tree" was never filled with concrete. Instead, its dead top was cut back to the point that, in 1936, it was ridiculed and described as a "hollow stump" with a "warty, unsymmetrical [*sic*] butt." Following the urging of W.M. Sellens, banker, the Vancouver park authorities agreed to remove the sign pointing to the "Big Tree". This turn-of-events did not go un-noticed. The editor of the *Vancouver Sun* wrote in his eulogy that, "The Hollow Tree has gone to its fathers, to become, one of the legends of time."

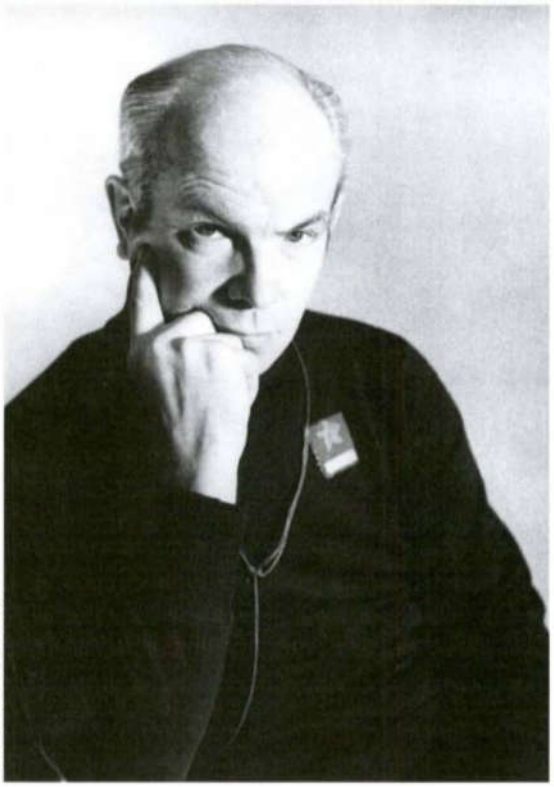
Time proved the editor, banker, and park authorities wrong. The "Big Hollow Tree" continued to be popular with visitors. When the tree appeared on the agenda again in 1965, it was to address a number of issues relating to the need to manage this popular, but admittedly worn, attraction. Park staff recommended installing steel tie-rods anchored to steel rods embedded in concrete above eye-level inside the tree to re-enforce the trunk, constructing a curb around the tree to discourage "parking" in the tree, and building a small parking lot.

For Major Matthews, the City Archivist, this approach was insufficient. The steel would only hold things together for another hundred years, at best. Matthews, like the foresters of 1913–1918, saw natural decay as a problem that could be addressed with the liberal use of concrete. He proposed making a wax mould of the tree and casting it in tinted concrete. Vancouver's landmark would thus be turned to stone and last another thousand years. Matthews' proposal is interesting because it shows the extent to which the "Big Tree" had become symbolic of nature; it no longer had to be natural itself.

Today, the "Big Hollow Tree" remains popular with park visitors. Ironically, the stump is now camouflaged by much younger hemlocks that have taken root in the aged cedar. The rest of the stump will eventually erode as time and the hemlocks' roots take their toll, but the most immediate threat to it at present is vandals who occasionally light fires inside. Apart from putting the fires out, Park staff have no explicit plans to try to improve any further on nature. ◆

Lord Strathcona, at right, conceals his enthusiasm during a visit to the tree.

Meg Stanley is a Vancouver writer and historical consultant.



National Archives of Canada

Bethune in Spain: man under a cloud

Nearly 60 years after his death, the Communist doctor Norman Bethune remains one of the most intriguing and renowned Canadians of the twentieth century. His fame is well justified. Born in 1890, in the 1920s he gained both favourable attention and notoriety in medical circles as an iconoclastic thoracic surgeon seeking to eradicate tuberculosis. He would become still more prominent in the 1930s for his political involvement on the side of progressive causes in Canada and Spain. In the last two years of his life he gave his considerable talents to the Chinese Communists in their struggle against Japanese aggression. When he died in 1939, succumbing to blood poisoning contracted while he operated on a wounded soldier, he became a revolutionary hero to millions in China and, later, beyond.

One of the most controversial aspects of his dramatic life relates to his brief but eventful participation in the Spanish Civil War. Particularly troubling is the question of why he was brought home in haste and under suspicion in May 1937. A remarkable report has recently emerged from the Communist International Archives in Moscow which demands a rethinking of our speculative knowledge about this incident. The document refers to a mysterious Swedish woman, who appears to be Bethune's lover. Spanish authorities were convinced she was politically tainted and even a Fascist spy.

Behind the Legend

Dr. Bethune's curious retreat from the Spanish Civil War

By Larry Hannant

In the summer of 1935 Norman Bethune's political conservatism was overturned when he made a trip to what, in the midst of the Great Depression, passed for heaven — the Soviet Union. No thinking person in the West could ignore the promise that the Soviet Union held out. Like thousands of others from the troubled capitalist countries, Bethune went to decide for himself whether the U.S.S.R. offered salvation. When he set out for Russia, Bethune was anything but a leftist. Yet in the months after his return his political sentiments shifted decisively. He joined the Communist Party of Canada in November 1935.

Bethune's revolutionary sentiments and his desire to take action to change the world found an outlet in the Spanish Civil War. On 18 July 1936 the Republican government of Spain was attacked by its own military, led by Fascist General Francisco Franco. Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini quickly threw in their lot with Franco. They supplied modern military equipment, bombers and fighter aircraft along with trained pilots and, from Italy, thousands of troops that fought full-scale battles. On the other hand, the left, and particularly the Communists, saw Spain as the opening of a world war against Fascism. By October 1936 Bethune had abandoned his medical career in Montreal and his prized Ford roadster and was bound for the arena in which he believed the "real issues of our time are going to be fought out."

His contribution to the Republican cause in Spain was noteworthy not just for its innovation but also for the speed with which he made an impact. Bethune arrived in Madrid on 3 November 1936, just days before Franco's right-wing forces unleashed a savage offensive on the Republican capital. The city was saved by the hastily-organized Spanish militia, the Communist Fifth Regiment and the first units of the International Brigades, anti-Fascists who, at the peak of their strength, would number 30,000, including 1,300 Canadians.

As a skilled surgeon, Bethune had the option of joining a military hospital in Madrid or working at the International Brigades training centre in Albacete, but he rejected both. Instead he quickly devised a plan to create a mobile blood transfusion service for the front. Having cleared the idea with Spanish officials and the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy (CASD) in Toronto, he travelled to London to immerse himself in the intricacies of blood transfusion and purchase the necessary equipment. Back in Madrid on 12 December, Bethune and fellow Canadians Hazen Sise and Henning Sorensen set up the transfusion unit in a fifteen-room apartment at 36 Principe de Vergara, in a posh district of Madrid. By 17 December, Bethune could report back to Canada that "we are now completely organized and settled in for work." The Instituto Hispano-Canadiense de Transfusión de Sangre was born.

For the next three months Bethune and the team of Canadians and Spaniards in the transfusion unit made a name for themselves by taking vital blood to the shifting fronts in the war zone. It was a momentous accomplishment, and the Spanish government paid tribute to Bethune's role in it by making him an honorary military *comandante*, a major, the highest rank held by any foreigner in the medical service. (The title was honorary because the Canadian government tried to prevent Canadians from assisting the Spanish Republicans by banning them from serving in the armed forces of a foreign state at war. Such service was made illegal by the 1937 Foreign Enlistment Act. In fact, the Canadian government specially graced the blood transfusion unit by amending the Foreign Enlistment Act to forbid Canadians from joining humanitarian agencies which did not assist both sides in the civil war.)

The month of April 1937, however, brought to a boil what had been a simmering conflict within the transfusion unit. On 19 April 1937, Bethune resigned as head of the team. Remorseful and

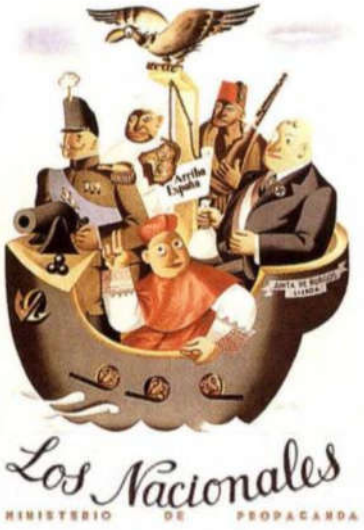
bitter, Bethune left "the centre of gravity of the world" on 18 May. He had been in Spain just six months, time enough to make himself revered and infamous.

Why Bethune was recalled in disgrace from Spain is still controversial. This hornets' nest has been prodded again by a startling report recently obtained from Russian archives. Before examining it, however, we should set out some of the traditional explanations for why he was ordered back to Canada.

The justification of the day, contained in Bethune's official letter of resignation as head of the blood transfusion unit, was that in view of the fact that the unit "is now operating as an efficient, well-organized institute ... it is clear to me that my function as chief ... has come to a natural end. If the resignation is accepted I will at once proceed to Canada to carry out propaganda work ..." These clipped, proper phrases, however, concealed a detailed, dramatic and messy divorce. Two of Bethune's close associates in the transfusion team — Sise and Sorensen — and Ted Allan, who arrived on the scene after Bethune had begun to jump the rails, have all left recollections or written about the incident.

Sise's letters and diaries suggest that tension between the Canadians and the Spanish staff in the unit and even jealousy of Bethune played a part in his recall. There were conflicts with the Spanish staff, especially the doctors, which can be traced to medical, political, cultural and personal differences. Sise goes so far as to attribute the problems to Spanish xenophobia, in particular the chauvinistic Dr. Antonio Calebras. The Spanish authorities and doctors were dubious of Bethune's expertise in the area of blood transfusion, since he was known primarily as a surgeon. They appear to have regarded him as parasitizing off the existing blood transfusion work of Dr. Frederick Duran Jordá, whose Barcelona blood collection system was in place before Bethune arrived, although it did not work directly at the front lines, as Bethune's did.

Republican propaganda poster, Spanish Civil War.



For their part, the Canadians questioned the qualifications and practices of the Spanish medical staff. Dr. Calebras had attached some of his relatives to the unit and they were drawing pay and supplies. Calebras' sister-in-law was apparently collecting two salaries, which infuriated Bethune. Another irritant was that some family members of the Spanish staff ate meals in the unit kitchen, although such petty abuses of CASD funds were not confined to the Spanish.

Temperamentally, Bethune could be irascible and high-handed, character traits which must have been exacerbated under the pressure, danger and defeats of the war. Sorensen, his interpreter and an active supporter — probably a member — of the Communist Party of Canada, was sometimes ashamed of Bethune's arrogance. In a Madrid bank, for instance, Bethune demanded that the teller serve him immediately because of his status. Spanish authorities, too, were not spared Bethune's wrath. During an interrogation by the Spanish military, for instance, Sorensen found that he had to soften, in translation, Bethune's hostile replies. He considered Bethune fortunate not to have been disciplined.

Bethune's independence and flair for publicity also made the Spanish authorities nervous. A large number of foreigners, many of them news correspondents, congregated at the institute's headquarters. The constant favourable press coverage Bethune's institute received may have made the Spanish jealous. His innovative idea of creating a film about the unit showed typical panache. He convinced the CASD to supply the funds and enlisted the help of a Hungarian photographer, Geza Karpathi (later known by his screen acting name, Charles Korvin), and an American news correspondent, Herbert Kline. Together they produced the film *Heart of Spain* about the transfusion service. But taking pictures and collecting information at the front — both integral to any film project — were deemed by the Spanish to be highly suspect.

A climate of suspicion and fear of treachery poisoned Republican Spain, and this also helped lead to Bethune's recall. Beginning with the siege of Madrid in November 1936, loyalty was everywhere suspect. Reporters asked Fascist General Emilio Mola, at the head of the four columns of troops descending on the city, which one would take it. The "fifth column" of secret Fascist sympathizers inside the city, he boasted. An already-edgy world immediately acquired a new phrase for treachery.

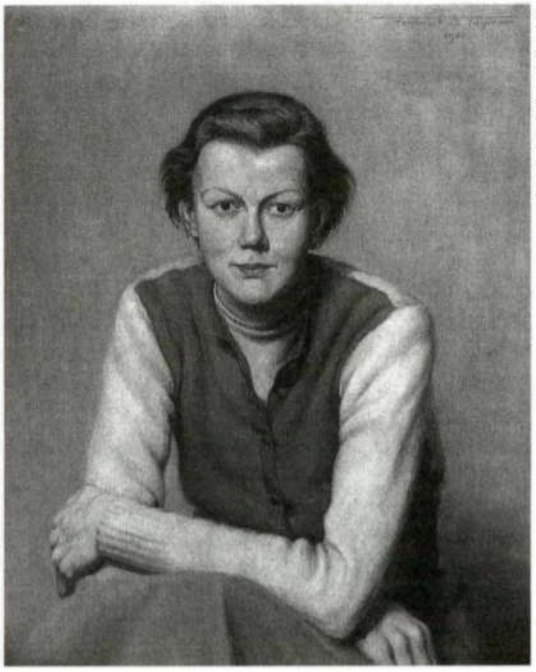
Despite the fact that no important civilian support for Franco materialized in Republican territory, the Spanish government took Mola's words zealously to heart. The campaign against internal enemies became particularly vicious in the spring of 1937, when an internal war erupted, a war against political dissidents of all stripes. Throughout March and April 1937 the Canadian Communist Party newspaper, the *Daily Clarion*, reported that the Spanish government was "hitting hard at spies," with the police breaking up alleged spy rings. Terror gripped Republican Spain,

mirroring the purge of "wreckers," "saboteurs" and "Trotskyists" in the Soviet Union. In such a climate, even Bethune's manifest hatred for Fascism did not put him above suspicion.

The spring of 1937 was also a period in which the Spanish Republican government gained new confidence. It reorganized and began to take control of the many groups which had sprung up, willy-nilly, amidst the chaos following the war's outbreak. The blood transfusion unit was one of the agencies the government wanted under its command. On 2 March 1937 the unit was incorporated into the Spanish military and placed under a control board of two Spanish doctors and Bethune. But the change contributed to a schism between Bethune and the Spanish. Feeling constrained and dissatisfied, Bethune reacted irrationally. One sign of this was a bizarre cable on 12 April to the CASD urging the committee to authorize him to withdraw the Canadian personnel and leave Spain. According to historian Roderick Stewart and writer Ted Allan, Bethune also took to drinking heavily.

Reorganized in March, the transfusion unit was an efficient team conveying blood to the central sections of the front round the clock. Although it was conceived by Bethune, it became mainly a Spanish operation, maintained primarily by the Spanish staff of doctors, nurses, technicians and support staff. Allan later commented that he was less than impressed with some of the Spanish doctors. They "were average human beings. ... Some were Republicans, some were Anarchists, and some were right wing Socialists." Indeed, Allan would subsequently assert that two of the Spanish doctors working at the institute were Franco sympathizers. Dealing with political conflict, managing staff and ensuring the smooth running of a bureaucracy was scarcely Bethune's *forté*.

Bethune's inability to fit into this new regime was pointed out by Tom Worsley, a British adventurer who worked closely but briefly with the Canadian doctor as a driver for the transfusion unit in February and March 1937. In a *roman à clef* written immediately after his return from Spain, Worsley portrayed Bethune harshly, but showed a keen eye for the conflicts within the organization which forced Bethune's departure. Worsley's fictional reconfiguration of Bethune, "Rathbone," was a bombastic empire-builder, holding court for the foreign press, spending money lavishly and rushing to military confrontations like an ambulance-chasing lawyer. (The importance of the fact that Bethune was the doctor in the ambulance sometimes eluded Worsley.) In February-March 1937, "Rathbone" was absent from Madrid and the institute for a full month. (Bethune's frequent absences from Madrid were also observed by Allan, and chronologies by Sise and Sorensen confirm that he was away from Madrid from late January until early March 1937.) With "Rathbone" gone, tensions festered. The Spanish medical staff were partly irate with him, but they were also locked in a feud with his secretary. "Gretchen," as Worsley called her, was "a big, blonde Swede" whose "striking appearance and warm nature had made her a well-known figure in Madrid."



National Archives of Canada

Montreal journalist Eugenia Watts was one woman who served with Bethune's transfusion unit in Spain. (Painting by Frederick B. Taylor.)

"Gretchen" and her relationship to Bethune are subjects until now unmentioned in biographies of Bethune. But some facts about her have recently been unveiled in an extraordinary document obtained from records of the Communist International in Moscow and deposited in the National Archives of Canada. It contains revelations which confirm some of Worsley's observations and make still more serious allegations relating to her, Bethune and his recall from Spain.

The report should first be put into context. Written by an anonymous figure in the leftist Spanish government, it reflects the state of extreme suspicion ruling the government and its Communist Party ally in the spring of 1937. Its contents suggest that someone in the government had launched a vendetta against Bethune, and was ready to raise any argument, specious or not, against him. It also indicates that "Gretchen" corresponds with a Swedish woman, identified in the report only as Kajsa. The report confirms that Kajsa was Bethune's secretary at the institute. Other sources identify her as Bethune's lover, too. Allan indicated that in early 1937 he chanced upon Bethune in bed with a naked young Swedish woman, a liaison confirmed in interviews of

Sorensen by Roderick Stewart. Notes by Sise from the time also contain a cryptic reference to "Kaijsa" and "language difficulty" at the institute.

Like the stories of so many women, Kajsa's Spanish Civil War experience has been overlooked in favour of the male volunteers'. Kajsa's involvement in the transfusion unit was ironic, because Bethune had earlier dismissed the idea of a woman serving with it. When Bethune met Hazen Sise on 29 November in London as he collected equipment to go to Spain, Sise's woman friend Moran Scott asked to return with them. Sise reported that

Bethune and the transfusion unit in action, Spain, 1937.

"Bethune put his foot down. He thought the situation was too dangerous. He didn't want to have the responsibility of a woman with him on the Unit and because we [were] literally racing to get to Madrid before the trap closed. ... after I'd been in Spain even for a week or two I could see that there were a great many girls who had come out ... doing all sorts of jobs to help." Indeed, the Spanish Civil War is significant because it was the first modern war which women joined voluntarily, under their own initiative and with their own objectives.

Spanish authorities stared down their noses at Kajsa, seeing her as a woman of loose morals, a supporter of the anarchists (and hence suspect to the Communists) and, more ominously, a spy. Suspicions about the large number of foreigners gathering at 36 Principe de Vergara caused Sorensen to inform the Spanish government. On 4 January 1937, the police arrived and took everyone into custody, Bethune, Sorensen and Sise included. The three Canadians were released, the report said, but "not so the rest. Among those detained were a commander, Harturg [Hartung], of Austrian nationality, and one Kajsa. This last one, after checking many things out, was set free. The commander disappeared and they say he was executed." Being of dubious loyalty had dire consequences in such desperate times. Kajsa was later at risk of being detained again for asking suspicious questions of a bridge guard, but was saved by the transfusion team's chauffeur. Nonetheless, the Spanish remained convinced she was engaged in acts that hinted of spying: "Currently, and due to Kajsa's initiative, it is said, there exists with the transfusion team a series of detailed maps, similar to military maps."

The report also attempted to implicate Bethune in nefarious acts, although the specific charges are utterly spurious — vague allegations about the disappearance of jewellery and documents from a sealed room at 36 Principe de Vergara, and this outlandish bid to portray him as a spy: "A suspicious fact which should also be considered is that Mr. Bethune openly takes detailed notes of the locations of bridges, crossroads, distances between determined points, journey times, etc., writing it all down carefully." Such details, of course, were vital information to the transfusion team, which delivered blood widely, day and night. The accusations are important mainly because they illustrate, generally, paranoia and, specifically, the extent to which some Spanish officials were prepared to manufacture a case to condemn Bethune.

The report points out one other fact about Bethune leaving Spain — the Canadians in the transfusion unit were themselves critical of him and instrumental in having the CASD bring him back to Canada. The Spanish report declares that Allan and Sorensen had written a letter of complaint to the Communist Party of Canada demanding his recall. Notes by Sorensen indicate that already by 18 March the Canadian party was being advised of trouble with Bethune. On 5 April according to Sorensen, he, Sise and another Canadian, Allen May, "persuaded Beth to leave." Snubbed by his own comrades, Bethune's exit was inevitable. The fate of Kajsa is, regrettably, unknown.

Extreme paranoia, jealousy, political intrigue and national chauvinism all contributed to Bethune's ignominious exit from Spain. His own intransigence and high-handedness also weakened him. The official documents tell this much. But much remains a mystery. Perhaps only by locating Kajsa could the full details of the personal side of the issue be brought to light. ◆

Larry Hannant is the editor of "The Politics of Passion: Norman Bethune's Writing and Art", to be published by the University of Toronto Press in March 1998.

Hawke of the *Transcript*

A forgotten hero of Canadian journalism

By John Edward Belliveau

When John Thomas Hawke stepped off the train at the Moncton depot on 1 June 1887 he brought with him an acerbity, flamboyance and drive that made him one of the boldest, brassiest and brightest newspapermen in Canadian journalism. He took as his symbol a fighting bantam rooster which crew at the top of his newspaper's front page every time the Liberals won an election. Moncton was, when he arrived, a wide-open, booming railroad town like an eastern Dodge City. Its streets were lined with saloons, and drifters from all over lurched from one to another past the bridle rails where riders hitched their horses. Halifax editors, furious because the Nova Scotia Railway headquarters had been removed when it became part of the Intercolonial, called Moncton "the Mudhole Metropolis". Hawke would become one of the most powerful and influential publishers in the Canada of his day, and one of the most controversial. And he was the only one who went to jail for his belief in freedom of the press.

Hawke, who was 33 when he came, had already been managing editor of the *Toronto Globe* and editor-in-chief of the *Ottawa Free Press*. The *Transcript* had been having difficulty surviving and its proprietor and his Liberal associates pleaded for help. They went directly to Wilfrid Laurier, then federal Opposition leader, asking him to find someone to build a Liberal newspaper to take on the troublesome Tory *Moncton Times*. Laurier looked up Hawke in the national capital and told him:

"Hawke, you've gone as far as you can go around here without heavy investment. I have just heard of what I think may be a real opportunity. Down in New Brunswick there is a railroad town called Moncton which, in my opinion, is bound to expand and eventually become a big city – perhaps the biggest in the East. Some of our friends down there have asked me if I could recommend a bright young newspaperman to take charge of a paper they have started and that is not doing so well."

John T. had been dead only eight years when I went to work for his newspaper in 1930, but his spirit continued to permeate the *Transcript* like some ever-present ghost of times past. It was impossible then to imagine that, half a century later, his dominant Liberal newspaper would have vanished as an entity, swallowed up in a combination with the very enemy Tory *Times* which he had come East to vanquish. It would now be called the *Times-Transcript*. As for the city itself, by the 1990s it would no longer be dominantly a railroad town but a thriving commercial and electronics communication centre, its journalism a tepid reminder of the past.

When Laurier recruited the new publisher in the 1870s, the paper's principal owner was William Robinson who was willing to sell for $800 and some long-term notes. Hawke came, saw and conquered. Being Hawke, he had hardly set down his bags when he was in the midst of a roaring political brawl and challenging all comers. Within a year, he had become nationally famous.

He soon became the subject of legend, the first bearing on a remark he made that day he stepped off the Quebec Express to see Moncton for the first time. A friendly drunk had approached him and asked, "Where in Hell have I seen you before?" To which John T. replied, "I don't know, my friend. What part of Hell do you come from?"

Born in Plymouth, Devon, but of Cornish descent, Hawke called himself a Cornishman. One of his direct ancestors was Admiral Edward Hawke – Hawke of Towton – the hero of Britain's naval battle of Quiberon Bay off France which in 1759 determined the outcome of the Seven Years' War. Though he later became First Lord of the Admiralty, Admiral Hawke had earlier been a buccaneer, and it didn't take long for the *Daily Times* to put that tag on his descendant.

The day after he had registered at the Brunswick Hotel in the midst of the town's 7,309 inhabitants, John T. Hawke published his philosophy and credo. He

advocated abolition of the provincial legislative council (senate), abolition of the office of lieutenant governor, and called for an elected national senate. He also wrote vigorously of "patronage going into the hands of unscrupulous cabinet ministers and office-holders eating out of the public trough."

Soon he was in full battle-cry attacking the "supersensitive loyalty of the *Times*, which recoils from Mr. Laurier for saying that if he were a half-breed he would have sympathized with Louis Riel." The same day Hawke announced a six-page newspaper to mark Queen Victoria's Jubilee. In another two days, he had taken to calling the *Times* "The Morning Boodler", with its crass ignorance and characteristic dishonesty. As Dean Weldon of Dalhousie University has written, "Hawke brought to Maritime journalism an acerbity hitherto unknown."

Hawke got into the thick of political warfare in this way: Sir Albert Smith, a Liberal M.P., had been known as "the Lion of Westmorland" and "the Fiery Smasher of Westmorland." (The Smashers were a kind of Smith pre-Confederation party in New Brunswick.) Smith was knocked out by Josiah Wood of Sackville in the federal campaign of 1882 after being a powerful federal Minister of Marine and Fisheries. Smith died soon after this defeat, many believed of heartbreak, and the county Liberals were in desperate shape until they found young Henry Robert Emmerson of Dorchester as a candidate. Soon he was a rising star, but Wood trimmed the young lawyer in his first try. After this 1887 election, a petition was filed in the court at Fredericton by Emmerson against Wood asking that "the election may be made void and Mr. Wood be declared disqualified."

It was alleged in the petition that 500 separate and distinct acts of bribery and corruption had been done by Conservative agents. Eventually Wood was charged personally with corrupt practices. To guard against legal errors, a second petition was filed in June. If such petitions were not heard within six months of filing, they expired. Mr. Justice J.J. Fraser of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick was given the case and three times changed the date for hearing.

Against Liberal objections, he explained that the time of the parliamentary session then proceeding would not count in computing the six months within the petition limit. But then, on 22 October, Wood's counsel, Pierre Landry, claimed that under the statute the time for voiding the election had expired. The Liberals appealed, but the full bench decided in Wood's favour. Since Judge Fraser sat with the full bench, he had clearly voted to reverse his own previous decision. He explained that he realized he had been wrong about the method of computation.

Westmorland was in a state of excitement and Publisher Hawke raised its temperature when he published this dispatch from Fredericton:

"A Scandalous Outrage – Advices from Fredericton state that the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, mainly composed of defeated Tory candidates, has dismissed both the Westmorland election petitions on the ground of lapse of time. The lateness of the hour (5 P.M.) at which this news is received prevents any comment on the judicial outrage, but on Monday in these columns will be exposed the most disgraceful judicial scandal, the details of which have ever stunk in the nostrils of a free people. Who are the men who have done this gross wrong? For the answers see Monday's *Transcript*."

When the paper came out on Monday, what Hawke had written went beyond the most fervent Grit expectations. It started this way:

"A Judicial Pooh-Bah – In Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *The Mikado* there is a character named Pooh-Bah who holds many offices and [in one of them] reverses the decisions of himself in the capacity of Lord Chancellor. Thousands of people on two continents have looked and laughed at this piece of comedy as an innocent play of sarcasm, but in the province of New Brunswick today the electors are presented with the spectacle as a reality."

After a summary of the case, Hawke wrote that there had been "a judicial blunder," that Josiah Wood had escaped just punishment for his offenses against the Controverted Elections Act – that the judge (Fraser) had reversed himself, first setting the trial date properly, then setting it back beyond the six months' limit to put the case out of court. Hawke added that Fraser had then gone to Dorchester (Westmorland's shiretown) and admitted his blunder "on the plea that every judge makes many mistakes in a lifetime." This, Hawke's editorial continued, "was the decision of Mr. Pooh-Bah in his capacity as Lord Chancellor, and then in the Supreme Court of New Brunswick on Saturday the judicial Pooh-Bah ... revised his former decision and ruled the petition out on the very ground which he formerly held was correct. Such is Mr. Justice Pooh-Bah Fraser's conception of law and justice."

From this journalistic assault, contempt of court proceedings ensued. Nevertheless, on 15 December Hawke again let the judges have it under the heading of "A Grave Public Evil." In this diatribe he wrote that certain judges had to have their fling at newspaper editors for contempt every time they dared question the decision of "Their Excellencies." If, he wrote, "they wanted to prosecute, there is a simple plan of self-protection for journalists. They could enumerate every occasion on which a court has to be adjourned because a judge is intoxicated." He then specified a recent occasion when the judge (patently Fraser) "was manifestly inebriated on the bench."

When called to Fredericton to show cause why he should not summarily be punished for contempt, Hawke himself addressed the court. Steeped in the principles of Edmund Burke, John T. astonished the court with his knowledge of law and the extent of his citations. But the judges reminded him that they, too, had read *The Mikado* and noted that Pooh-Bah's chief characteris-

tic was the taking of bribes (called "insults") for various prostitutions of his many offices. Hence, the Pooh-Bah editorial in the *Transcript* meant that Judge Fraser had been bribed to kill the Westmorland petition.

That was too much for the judges and they found Hawke guilty, but they did not pass any sentence and when the publisher returned to Moncton to await the outcome he was widely cheered. Hawke kept up his fire and other papers joined him. The overall view of editors across Canada was that judges and the courts were not above criticism for their conduct and for their decisions, after those decisions had been rendered. Chief Justice Allen of New Brunswick, shocked by the national publicity, tried to give the editor an easy way out. He gave notice that Hawke would be allowed to purge himself by apology or otherwise. The judge was aiming at the wrong man.

A Writ of Attachment was issued and Hawke then announced that if the judges wanted him they would have to arrest him or pay his expenses to Fredericton. Sheriff McQueen of Westmorland, a political friend of the editor, was named to make the arrest. Off they went and Hawke took advantage of some obscure technicality to have himself re-arrested in every county through which they passed.

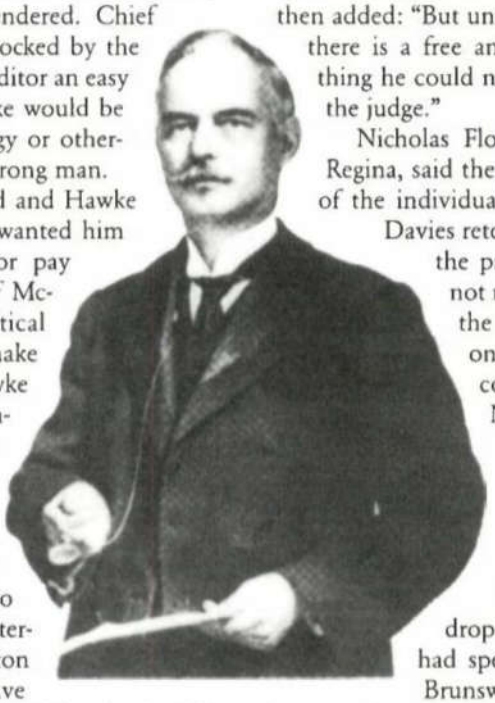
By 26 April 1888, John T. was in front of the full bench of the Supreme Court and he refused to answer what were described as "interrogatories". The *Gleaner* of Fredericton reported that Hawke refused to give recognizances and was conducted to jail by the sheriff. Next morning he was sentenced for contempt to two months imprisonment, and to a fine of $200.

The *Halifax Chronicle* called it "judicial persecution", and everywhere the newspapers set up an uproar. Editors bombarded the minister of justice with telegrams demanding Hawke's release and even newspapers previously opposed or neutral joined the combat. A long and thoughtful series of editorials under the general heading "Prison Thoughts" was started by Hawke himself in the *Transcript*. In Ottawa the pot was boiling. John T. Hawke, the young editor and proprietor of the little *Daily Transcript* in distant Moncton, the new railroad town growing rapidly into a city, had become a national celebrity and defender of the freedom of the press.

In the House of Commons, a fierce debate was launched on 9 May 1888, and continued through the day and into the night. Hansard contains some 60,000 words. The giants of parliament were heard. Louis Davies of Prince Edward Island (afterward, Sir Louis, Chief Justice for Canada) supported Hawke's position and the Hon. John Thompson, later to be Prime Minister of Canada, spoke for the government.

Davies based his argument on the proposition that "after the trial is ended and judgement is finally delivered, no comment however strong, no language however violent, which a newspaper editor may choose to publish can be punished by judges except through the ordinary channels and in the ordinary way ... that is by libel action." Hawke had been summoned for contempt in which there is no trial, but he was not charged with libel which would require a trial. He had been called before the bench, not charged criminally. Thompson conceded that Hawke had a right to criticize after the trial and even to demand that Fraser be removed from the bench, then added: "But under the law of every country where there is a free and independent judiciary, the one thing he could not do was to impute corruption to the judge."

Nicholas Flood Davin, the Irish editor from Regina, said the real point was whether the liberty of the individual is not endangered by the press. Davies retorted that Davin had said liberty of the press was once a living subject but not now, and he added, "I may say that the Star Chamber was a living power once, and it became dead ... but its corpse has now come to live again in New Brunswick."



John Thomas Hawke

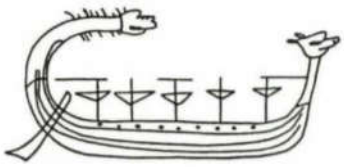
The Government let the debate drop and refused to release Hawke. He had spent his first anniversary as a New Brunswicker in jail, but on 27 June 1888, he was released upon serving his 60 days and paying the fine. The day he reached Moncton, the provincial Liberal Association was in session, probably not by coincidence, and there was a grand welcome for the returning hero. A band led the parade from the railroad station, and Hawke was given a purse of $1,000. Then the band took John T. all the way home.

Though Hawke could never be quite that popular again, he had become the real leader of the Liberals in eastern and southern New Brunswick. He had taken the embattled Grits out of the wilderness. Henry Robert Emmerson's political career went from the legislative council to the premiership of New Brunswick. Then he ran federally and became Minister of Railways and Canals, which made him supreme in Moncton where he and Hawke, under governmental patronage, were driver and conductor of the Intercolonial Railway.

As for Judge Fraser, who had himself once been premier and had certainly been drunk on the bench – no one ever denied it – the Conservatives in Ottawa made him Lieutenant-Governor of the province in 1893. ◆

John Edward Belliveau is a retired newspaperman who lives in Shediac, New Brunswick.

David Gardner

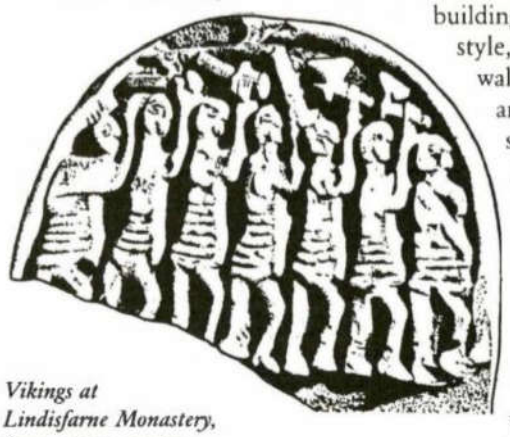


Vikings at Play

The unique pleasures of Vinland

With all the fuss and focus on the impending Second Millennium and this year's 500th anniversary celebrations of John Cabot's supposed landfall in 1497, we should not forget the First Millennium and the 15 years that the Vikings colonized Canada. Scholars are not exactly sure where Cabot landed, but thanks to the excavations commenced in 1961 and successfully completed in 1968 by the Norwegian explorer Helge Ingstad and his wife Anne-Stine Ingstad, there can be no doubt that the Vikings established a settlement between 1000 and 1015 A.D., on the north-eastern tip of the Great Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland. In 1978, L'Anse aux Meadows was declared the first UNESCO World Heritage Site, a patch of hallowed historical ground deemed to be "of exceptional universal value."

Whether L'Anse aux Meadows is actually the mythological Vinland will probably never be resolved. Defenders cite two ancient and now authenticated maps that identify Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula tip either as "Winlandie" or the "Island of Vinland." They also estimate that the sailing-time from Greenland to Newfoundland would be approximately nine hours, a length of time vindicated in the Sagas.



Vikings at Lindisfarne Monastery, from a stone carving.

The locals call it "Lancy Meadows" but this is an anglicized corruption of its French name *L'Anse au méduse* or "The Cove of the Jellyfish". The outer bay is very shallow and French fishermen long ago noted that shoals of jellyfish could be found there in the summer months. Of course, this shallow bay also meant that the flat-bottomed Viking ships could be pulled up on shore. In any case, L'Anse aux Meadows has stuck, perhaps because the site is a grassy field.

On this barren meadow were clustered the semicircular remains of eight buildings built in an ancient Norse style, with thick, six-to-nine foot walls of turf, and roofs of timber and sod. There was a sauna, a smithy nearby for smelting peat-bog iron, five additional boat sheds near the beach, and one multi-roomed building that measured approximately 55' by 70'. It is this building in roughly cruciform shape that seems to contain a square Viking Great Hall at its centre, with five or six smaller living quarter rooms arranged around its perimeter. All the rooms have hearths and in the Great Hall there is an extended, sunken ember fire-pit for warmth and cooking. As Helge Ingstad wrote, "Here ... the Vinland Voyagers must have gathered to work, eat, sing and tell tales." The Viking Great Hall, of course, was not a theatre because there would be no theatre buildings in Europe until the late sixteenth century. But it was an indoor meeting-place where games could be played and the paratheatrical *ludi* of medieval times might be performed.

"Paratheatre" isn't in the *Oxford Dictionary* yet, but it should be. Para means "beside", "beyond" or a "modification of", and is perhaps most easily understood in the word "parallel". The Circus is our primary example of paratheatrical activity, with its early nineteenth-century combination of pageantry, horse-riding, animal-baiting, juggling, acrobatics, instrumental music and clowning. But these goings-on have existed separately since time immemorial as have the bards and minstrels (or *skalds* in Scandinavia), the sporting contests, and folkloric pastimes of the village green. The umbrella word for these diverse medieval games and amusements was taken from the Roman. They were called *ludi* (singular *ludus*), the word for play. For the Greeks and Romans physical play was balanced and equated with verbal and imaginative play.

The evolution of European (and Norwegian) drama does not get underway until the little, liturgical, Latin dramas of the Easter trope begin in the

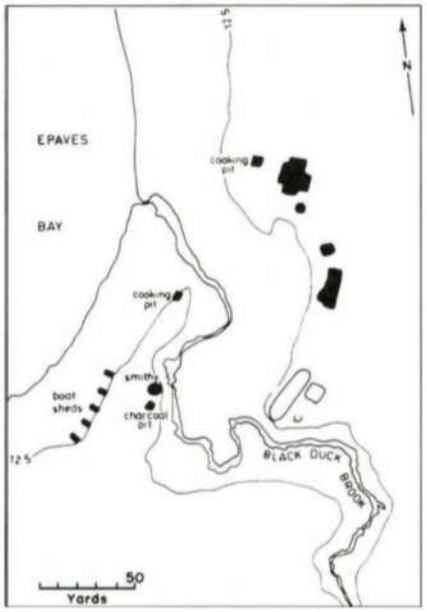
twelfth century to be followed by the Mystery and Cycle plays in the various vernacular languages of Europe a century later. The flowering of mainstream Western drama, the building of theatres, proscenium staging, the development of scenery, the story-line ballet, and opera, would not happen until the fourth quarter of the sixteenth century. In Norway the first vernacular play *Adam's Fall* was written in 1562. There is no Viking Theatre entry in the *Oxford Companion to the Theatre.*

So what we are talking about in Vinland is the possibility of paratheatrical *ludi* and probably pre-liturgical pagan practices, and, of course, the rich literary tradition of the sagas.

The remarkably detailed oral accounts of the Viking explorations in North America were set down in writing 180 to 200 years later in two famous sagas, the *Saga of the Greenlanders* (c.1190) and *Eirik's Saga* (c.1260), both extant in Iceland. Although written anonymously the Vinland sagas must have been drawn from verbal material composed either in Vinland itself, or in Greenland after the colonizing adventurers had returned home. The Vikings became Christians about 1000 A.D., and sagas began to be written down in the twelfth century at the instigation of the Icelandic Church. Their purpose was a dual one, to combat illiteracy and to counteract such unsavoury pagan pastimes as dancing to the singing of love poetry. At first the prose sagas "were read from the pulpit" but once they became popular "a brisk manuscript-making industry" developed and it was a short step from the "strictly religious saga-entertainments to secular saga-entertainment." Even though the two Vinland sagas relate basically the same historical incidents there were significant variations between them. Scholars estimate that the less sophisticated *Saga of the Greenlanders* is the older and more original document, and that *Eirik's Saga*, coming some 50 to 75 years later, is a clarification and revision of the earlier work, probably in order to better eulogize the families central to it.

From the sagas, it appears there were four colonizing expeditions to Vinland. On each occasion the Viking Greenlanders spent at least one winter in the more temperate climate. Leif the Lucky's first ship (1000–01) carried a crew of 35. They built a series of houses which were subsequently "rented out" to the future colonists.

Leif's brother undertook the next voyage (1003–04). It ended tragically



Plan of site at L'Anse aux Meadows. (Canadian Geographic.)

when a uniped (a one-legged native) shot an arrow into his groin. There is a Passamaquoddy Indian legend concerning unipeds. Certain braves had their legs bound together to stop them from wandering and to teach them to attend to their duties. Presumably they were allowed to hop about on one leg as part of the disciplining process.

The third expedition was the most extensive and for the first time the sagas mention *ludi* entertainments, albeit in Greenland. We learn that the Christmas feastings extended on into Gudrid's wedding feast, and that "there was much chess-playing and story-telling and many other entertainments that enrich a household."

While story-telling is self-explanatory, the predilection for evenings based on the spoken word may not be. We are told in one account that "people made and recited poetry, swapped verses, sometimes competed in scurrility; they asked riddles, made comparisons ... or played a similar game in which the virtues of a chosen object or person were enumerated." We are reminded of the boasting and insulting games of the Canadian native peoples. Liquor would also be quaffed from the hollowed horn of an animal. In the *Saga of Arrow-Odd* we read of a drinking contest in which the contestants sang one verse of a poem and then drained a horn, the object being to see who could stay standing the longest.

Chess was one of the most popular of the Viking "board games". Dice games, checkers, "Fox and Geese", were also common, and peg-boards (cribbage) have been found in Norse graves. Eleventh-century chess pieces were carved in wood and stone, but the Greenland chessmen were "simple, not shaped as human figures."

Dancing to ballads and love poetry that was sung was a popular indoor household "entertainment". But less is known about Viking music. There were harps, some forms of the fiddle, pipes, and flutes made of bone. At L'Anse aux Meadows, party-guests would have sat around the Great Hall on earthen benches or sleeping-platforms, which were covered with animal skins or their leather sleeping-bags. The interior would have been illuminated from the ember-pit or by shallow lamps; wicks floating in stone bowls filled with seal or whale oil.

Gudrid had her fortune told by a pagan sibyl, which is another example of Greenland diversion that could have occurred in Vinland. Gudrid, now a Christian, was reluctantly persuaded to sing warlock-songs she had been taught as a child, to welcome in the spirits. A year later (1007) in Viking Canada, Gudrid gave birth to a son, Snorri, the first recorded European child known to be born in territorial Canada and the Western hemisphere.

Her husband Thorfinn's Vinland expedition (1007–9) was a major one, with possibly three ships, and depending which saga you read, either 65 or 160 men and women. Because they intended to establish a permanent settlement they took livestock "of all kinds". There were cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and horses in Greenland, so we cannot help wondering if horses as well as cattle were taken to Vinland. Horse-racing and horse-fighting were

favourite Viking *ludi*. Stallions, like cocks, were especially bred to fight together and there were wagers on the outcome. There were pagan fertility rites, as well, in which a horse was sacrificed and eaten for its strength-giving properties. On St. Stephen's Day (26 December) in the early morning, everybody would saddle up for a wild ride through the woods and throw coins into a stream. It was a custom attributed to St. Stephen who is often referred to as a stable-boy.

Leif Erickson and friends off the coast of Vinland.

Gudrid's husband also had problems with the "Skraelings" as they called the natives. But he did trade cow's milk with them. On one occasion one of their bulls charged and bellowed at the aboriginals, terrifying them. In later confrontations, the Skraelings whirled wooden objects on a sinew over their heads, producing an extraordinary ventriloquial sound like threshing. Eventually these Skraeling assaults, plus sexual dissension between the bachelors and the married men, brought the third colonizing experiment to an end. There was one memorable episode, however, to conclude it. During an attack by the Skraelings when the men were fleeing from a barrage of missiles, Leif the Lucky's half-sister, the illegitimate Freydis, turned and took an heroic stand. Although she was in an advanced state of pregnancy, she picked up a sword, laid bare her breasts and slapped the naked sword against them. The Skraelings stopped in their tracks and fled. It has been suggested that the Beothuk Indians had a taboo against killing women and that Beothuk women were known to have bared their breasts when attacked, in order to demonstrate to their pursuers that they were women. Freydis may have witnessed this defence tactic and borrowed it.

Freydis, however, was a blood-thirsty amazon aggressor when she wanted to be, as we shall see. It is in the fourth and final recorded voyage to Vinland (1013–14), which Freydis helped to organize, that we learn of *ludi* not just in Greenland but on North American soil.

There were two ships, each with thirty men and five women (Freydis cheated and concealed an extra five men in her vessel). The second ship contained the brothers Helgi and Finnbogi and their followers. Freydis and party lived in "Leif's houses", and obliged the brothers' group to build a place of their own "farther inland". From the *Saga of the Greenlanders* we gather that the autumn was spent amicably felling timber, a valuable cargo for the Greenland settlements situated above the tree-line. Then "when winter set in, the brothers suggested that they start holding games and other entertainments. This was done for a while..."

From this casual sentence, we can establish a new first date for European paratheatrical performance in North America, in all probability at the L'Anse aux Meadows campsite.

There were both summer and winter Viking cult festivals. In the summer the Scandinavian "maypole" became a midsummer pole garlanded in the shape of a woman, or in coastal communities, rigged like the mast of a ship. But of probably greater interest in our particular year in Vinland is the Nordic "Jul" (Yule) which was celebrated as a winter solstice sun-festival, which took place during a twelve-day rest period when all "turning action" (grinding flour, spinning and perhaps cutting timber) ceased in the same way that the sun seemed to rest before reversing its pattern and gradually increasing the amount of light seen in a day. It was a family festival, but for the dead as well as the living. The Vikings had a parade of spirits and ancestors, gnomes and trolls, that returned to visit during "Jul". Special tables were laid out with food and there were beds prepared for the deceased guests. Even a steam bath was kept ready, and we remember that a sauna was found at L'Anse aux Meadows. If the ghosts had been lost at sea, they usually came just to dry their clothes by the fire without saying a word, but other spirits stayed throughout the feast and enjoyed the shenanigans.

If there was a Thor-goat (a male billy-goat) in Vinland, it would be especially honoured, for "Jul" was also celebrated in honour of Frey, the god of fertility (after whom Freydis was probably named). If no goat were present, then a couple of lads would climb under a skin and pretend. There were also various '"hobby-horse" games with miming and mummery. The Yule goat-games of the Norse were a time of "masquerade and the shameless behaviour that goes with it." These pagan cult-celebrations were slow to die despite the advent of Christianity. And we learn that they included

"processions, dramatic shows of mythical episodes and competitive games."

These games or athletic contests included running, jumping, leg wrestling, skiing, skating and even a ball-game played on the ice with a bat, that would seem to presage ice hockey. Trials of physical strength and endurance were common, such as climbing rockfaces, and, in the summer, swimming, especially long distances underwater. One of the oldest sports was Varpa, played with flat, five-kilo (approximately 11-pound) stones, that were tossed underhand towards an upright pole; the object being to get as close as possible without knocking it over, a combination of cricket, curling and horseshoe pitching. Another sport with an unpronounceable name (*stangstortning*) sounds identical to the Scottish game of "tossing the caber" (and we remember that the Vikings did visit Scotland). A thick tree-pole about 12 feet long and weighing nearly 50 pounds, is lifted vertically in both hands and tossed end-over-end towards an imaginary clock. The pole has to land between 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock, with extra points if you can make it read exactly noon. And there were the usual competitions with weapons: throwing spears, shooting arrows, and hand-to-hand fighting with sword and shield. Then there was pillow-fighting with the contestants straddling a log raised about four feet off the ground. Armed with coloured pillows they took turns whacking each other until someone was knocked off. But my favourite is the contest between two men who would race forward and aft on a moving warship, by stepping from oar to oar as the crew rowed.

Hunting was not merely an outdoor *ludus* but a way of life for the Norse Greenlander and a matter of trade with Iceland, Ireland, Norway and the rest of Europe. As well as polar-bear rugs, reindeer- and seal-skins, fox-pelts, walrus-tusk and Narwhal horn (for its healing and aphrodisiacal powers), there were also the famed white falcons of Greenland, and we can imagine the Vinland adventurers enjoying the medieval sport of falconry.

Finally, there were also the familiar itinerant clowns, jugglers and acrobats of the medieval age found in the Norwegian courts of the Scandinavian kings, or on the village roads travelling from marketplace to marketplace. With a population estimated at between three and nine thousand in the Viking settlements of Greenland, it is conceivable that a few professional jesters were present there, along with the sibyls, and therefore potentially taken to Vinland as well. However, it is quite clear that they were not on the same social level as the sibyls or the poetic *skalds*. We are reminded what it meant to be a rogue and vagabond by a quite amazing law, the so-called "players" statute which covered the civil rights of an injured minstrel party: "If a player is struck, that is always invalid [*i.e.*, there is never any redress]. If a player is wounded, one who goes with a fiddle, and with viol or drum, then a wild heifer is to be brought to the raised middle of the assembly place. Then all the hair is to be shaved off its tail and the tail greased. Then the player is to be given newly-greased shoes. Then he is to hold the heifer by the tail and the heifer is to be lashed with a sharp whip. If he can hold it, then he shall have this fine animal and enjoy it as a dog enjoys grass. If he cannot hold it, let him have and put up with what he got, shame and hurt."

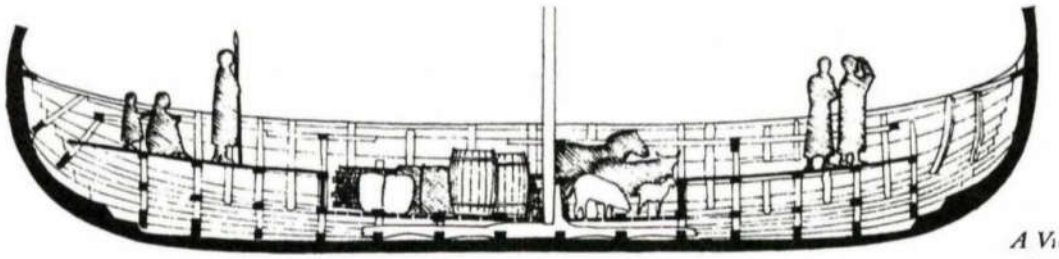
"Holding-the-tail-of-the-heifer" could have been a spectator sport in Vinland, for we remember that livestock were brought with the third expedition.

This is not to say, of course, that all or even very many of these Viking "games and other entertainments" were practised at L'Anse aux Meadows. We can only presume that from this borrowed compilation some were performed, and then only "for a while" during the Freydis expedition, for "trouble broke out and ill-feeling arose between the two parties. The games were abandoned, the saga tells us, and all visiting between the houses ceased; and this state of affairs continued for most of the winter."

The colonizing experiment at Vinland was about to come to its infamous and bloody end. Freydis and her men systematically annihilated the brothers' group one night, and back in Greenland swore that the others had simply decided to stay on in Vinland. But Freydis was found out and subsequently exiled.

The Greenland colonies, too, gradually disappeared over the years. A Norwegian ship in 1406 reported that "no people were there, only cattle running wild."

The Viking era was mysteriously over, and the "rest is silence". ◆



A Viking "knorr" used for transport and settlement. (Viking Ship Museum, Roskilde, Denmark.)

Actor and theatre historian David Gardner lives in an historic log house at Sutton West, Ontario.

Representative Lives

BY ANNE MORTON

I BLESS YOU IN MY HEART
Selected Correspondence of Catharine Parr-Traill
Edited by Carl Ballstadt, Elizabeth Hopkins, and Michael A. Peterman. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Buffalo and London, 1996. 437 pp., illus. $39.95.

HENRY & SELF
The Private Life of Sarah Crease, 1826–1922
By Kathryn Bridge. Sono Nis Press, Victoria, British Columbia, 1996. 216 pp., illus. $21.95.

Catharine Parr Traill (1802–1899) was an Englishwoman who emigrated to Upper Canada in 1832, shortly after her marriage to Thomas Traill (1793–1859), a half-pay army officer. The Traills settled in the Peterborough area. Thomas Traill, poor man, was not a success as a farmer in the backwoods, and his family had a harder time than many. At the age of 16 Catharine began the career as a writer which was to continue for the rest of her life. Even in her last letter, left uncompleted two days before her death, she is writing of "cautious English publishers". It is for books such as *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836), *Canadian Wild Flowers* (1868) and *Studies of Plant Life in Canada* (1885) that she is remembered today. Sarah Crease (1826–1922) was the daughter of London University's first Professor of Botany, John Lindley. A talented botanical illustrator and watercolourist, she married Henry Crease (1823–1905) in 1853. Crease was a barrister by profession and a member of a family prominent in the Cornish mining industry. Sarah and Henry had high hopes of the Wheal Vor mine but Henry, alas, was no businessman. Things got into such a mess that he had to flee to France to evade his creditors. He had at least the good sense to wind up in Victoria, where his family was to join him in 1860, just as Vancouver Island was about to get civilized. Armed with his "jolly useful little *Cabinet Lawyer*", he went on to enjoy a distinguished career as lawyer, Attorney General and judge, receiving a knighthood in 1896. Sarah was not only a "wife of"; she was also a pillar of the Anglican Church and community organizations such as the Local Council of Women.

I Bless You in My Heart contains 132 of the almost 500 extant letters written by Catharine Parr Traill. The book is divided into three sections, each with an excellent biographical introduction. Each letter is followed by notes explaining matters of fact. There are several black and white illustrations and a useful set of genealogies. As the book offers us Catharine without much in the way of interpretation we feel able to encounter her engaging personality directly. When the journalist Faith Fenton was to interview Catharine shortly before her 94th birthday, she was asked by a granddaughter not to call her "a wonderful old lady. ... Everybody does and we get so tired of it." Fenton's response was, "Yet there is no other phrase so true." And what else can we call a woman who, after a fall at the age of 90, decided that perhaps she should no longer "indulge [her] love of scrambling over rocks after plants ... I am too old for such gay frolics." Throughout her life Catharine was a passionately interested observer of the world and its wonders, from plants to people. She was always ready for new experience and prepared to enjoy happiness when it came her way. Once, on a trip to Ottawa, she discovered that she had brought a friend's eyeglasses in mistake for her own. Apologizing for the mix-up, she wrote: "I am sure dear Ellen that you suffered more than I have done, for I can and do read with yours – for I have wonderfully accommodating eyes like an old pussy-cat." Her "wonderfully accommodating eyes" are a symbol of her character; as she herself said, she was a "free spirit."

Sarah Crease adorned her correspondence with drawings.

The first half of *Henry & Self* is a biography of Sarah Crease, with abundant quotations from letters by her and by members of her family.

The second half is an annotated edition of a journal that Sarah kept on a three-month trip to the Cariboo in the fall of 1880, when she accompanied Henry on the assize circuit. It was on this occasion that he sentenced the notorious McLean brothers to death. The journal is interspersed with letters to and from Sarah. The book is lavishly illustrated, in both colour and black and white, with many of the illustrations by Sarah herself. *Henry & Self* began life as an M.A. thesis and so the usual points, such as telling us that Sarah was not friends with her servants, are duly made. I for one could have done with less of this and would have preferred an adequate treatment of Sarah's Anglicanism. On the other hand, Bridge is able to sweep the reader up into sharing her admiration for Sarah and the central accomplishment of her life – a loving marriage of over 50 years.

It has to be admitted that Sarah may not be a woman to everyone's taste. She was full of prejudices – concerning Aboriginals, Chinese, Methodists and Roman Catholics – and some of her statements are distressing to read. One of the less obnoxious examples (Americans will disagree) comes from the 1880 journal: "[Mr. Onderdunk] is a very nice quiet man, with a good-natured fat little wife and some pretty children. They are all Americans but Mr. O. has none of their unpleasant peculiarities." And yet I found it hard not to like Sarah, inflexible and opinionated as she could be. She had a sense of fun, evidenced in her lively, quirky sketches. And she could be as endearingly earnest as a child, whether mooning in the garden over her fiancé's portrait or reproaching herself, on her 52nd birthday: "Alas! That I should be such a Christian dwarf."

Despite their differences, Catharine and Sarah had much in common. Christian faith, nationality, social class and longevity are obvious parallels but there are others. In considering what unites them, we can see the lives of these two women as representing the lives of many others whose lives are not so well-documented. Both women had large families. Between the ages of 31 and 46 Catharine bore nine children, while Sarah produced seven between the ages of 27 and 46, suffering at least one miscarriage. With more experience than enough of the troubles of pregnancy, childbirth and child-rearing, they give proof in their letters of much joy. Catharine paints a loving picture of baby number eight (the future HBC Chief Factor William Traill) at her breast; Sarah gleefully tells Henry of a daughter's antics in the womb.

Babies were welcomed despite an awareness of the crushing sorrow that their loss might bring. One of Sarah's daughters died in infancy and another in her early twenties. Two of Catharine's daughters died in infancy and another in her early fifties. Her two oldest sons died in their thirties. These sorrows were endured by means of Christian faith and female heroism. When Catharine's first grandchild died she prepared his body for burial: "I had so often clothed him as an infant and now it was my duty to robe him for the grave."

Their large families added to the burden of their mothers' financial anxiety. Both women feared that the constraints of pioneer life might force their children, especially the eldest, to grow up as

Sarah Crease: "you are in my thoughts...".

ill-educated drudges. For many years Catharine had to struggle with real poverty, agonizing over how her children were to have shoes. She was to live a long time before achieving even a small degree of security, tartly remarking at 96: "I think our dear Queen owes the old lady a pension." The Creases were better off but they were burdened with debt from the Cornish disaster, had a social position to maintain and the church and charities to support. Perhaps as a result of her personality and the trying circumstances of her early married life, Sarah was never to be easy about money. In the dreams of both women, one suspects, the wolf was never far from the door.

Once Catharine and Sarah had left England as young women they were never to see their native land or their English families again. Family responsibilities and lack of money made a trip home impossible. Catharine's two youngest children, William and Walter, went West to work for the Hudson's Bay Company, and were as remote as if they were on the other side of the Atlantic. Sarah was often separated from Henry during their engagement and the first years of the marriage. Later, she was to be cut off from her children when they were in England for schooling or to visit relatives (experiences that Sarah and Henry were determined they should have, whatever the cost). Even in Canada, where Catharine at least had one of her sisters, Susanna Moodie, the two women travelled very little. Catharine never went farther east from Peterborough than Ottawa or farther west than Toronto. In later life Sarah made the occasional trip to San Francisco but her jaunt to the Cariboo in 1880 was the first holiday of her married life.

It was sending and receiving letters that helped make their isolation and separation from those they loved endurable. In their busy lives, while the never-ending sewing piled up, they made the time for the vitally important task of writing letters. Their letters were the product of emotional need and not, as we often assume about our ancestors, a surplus of leisure. Sarah began one letter to Henry when he was trying to make a new life in Victoria: "Morning noon and night and every hour besides you are in my thoughts and fondly cherished in my heart of hearts. ... Your dear letters are so precious to me ... the anticipation of them almost unnerves me and makes me all unstrung and out of time."

These books are worth reading for the insights they give us into the characters of Catharine and Sarah and the circumstances of life in nineteenth-century Canada. What makes them so vivid and compelling are the emotions – love and sorrow, joy and fear – that drove Catharine and Sarah to write in the first place. We owe a great debt of thanks to all those – family members, archivists, editors and publishers – who made these books possible and so enabled us to share the lives and letters of these two courageous and loving women.

Anne Morton is an archivist with the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Winnipeg.

Immoral, Odious and Unethical

BY PETER CALAMAI

PROFITS & POLITICS
Beaverbrook and the Gilded Age of Canadian Finance
By Gregory P. Marchildon.
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Ontario, 1996.
348 pp., illus. $39.00.

It is not possible to rehabilitate any part of the character of Max Aitken, the Canadian financier who later became Lord Beaverbrook, the notoriously odious British press baron. Even during Aitken's earlier business life in Canada, the evidence of immoral actions, unethical dealings and sharp practices is simply incontrovertible.

For example, in the 1909–10 merger of 12 companies into the Canada Cement Company, Aitken, the chief architect of the deal, scooped up a $600,000 profit for a few months of risky wheeling and dealing. At the time, a grain farmer on the prairies, battling the harsh elements and often harsher markets, was fortunate to clear $1,000 a year.

"It is little wonder that many people at the time (and since) have considered this degree of profit-taking unconscionable," concludes author Gregory P. Marchildon.

Marchildon expresses no clear view on the subject himself, despite being free with his opinions on other issues. It is not apparent, from the contents of this book, that there is any level of profit-taking by high financiers which he would find unconscionable, so long as outright swindles were avoided. His ultimate verdict on Max Aitken is that "although he often resorted to deception and puffery to reap the largest possible profit in every transaction, his actions were never criminally fraudulent."

Considering the lack of insider trading laws and a workable anti-combines regime during the decade of Aitken's greatest deals, this is setting the standard frightfully low. As well, Marchildon's accounting of the costs and benefits of Aitken's three biggest mergers – Canada Cement, Canadian Car and Foundry and Stelco – makes no attempt to look at the human impact: the lost jobs when 20 companies were collapsed into these three, the lost wages, the increased welfare costs, etc. The whole subject is treated as Max Aitken would have wished, as numbers on a ledger sheet, not as decisions that upset the lives of tens of thousands of ordinary, hard-working Canadians.

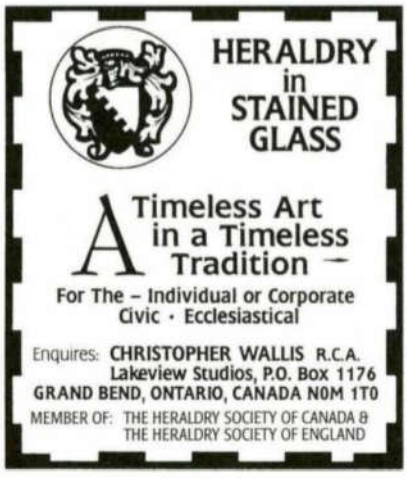
Perhaps historiographers can defend such a blinkered approach for what the author describes as "a business history of a very particular type, one that focuses on financial entrepreneurship and the organizational and managerial forms that are created or adapted to achieve the entrepreneur's objectives." Inside that self-donned straitjacket, Marchildon has indeed produced a riveting tale based on the brilliant use of an overlooked resource, the papers concerning Aitken's Canadian business in the House of Lords Records Office.

Anyone wanting to know how a not-very-promising youth from New Brunswick was transformed within 10 years into the first financier in the Michael Milken mold – *How Max Did the Trick*, as Arthur Conan Doyle would have titled it – will find the answers in this book. Here is the $10,000 bribe, the misleading statements, the double-crosses, the million-dollar-flip and the continuing hypocrisy. Yet here also is the genius that transformed initial imitation into ultimate innovation and attracted some of the best financial talent of that generation as colleagues and employees – Arthur Nesbitt, Ward Pitfield and Walton Killam.

Yet it is solely a mechanical "how" which Marchildon answers; he concedes in the book's preface that he "has had tremendous difficulty understanding what made the man tick." In the end this puzzlement (suffered by other biographers) produces a book that resembles liver without the onions, all nutrition and no zest.

And was it really all that nutritious? I am not competent to critique the author's handling of the intricacies of high finance (much less an appendix elaborating on a new merger index covering Canadian manufacturing enterprises from 1885 until 1918). However, my initial acceptance of Marchildon's mastery of the financial details was somewhat shaken by his performance in the areas of propaganda and journalism, topics where I have some small competence.

The author, an academic who is now a senior official with the government of Saskatchewan, pronounces Aitken "the twentieth century's first chief of mass propaganda" for his role in Britain's First World War propaganda efforts. Cited as support for this conclusion are two biographies elsewhere found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wanting. Aitken's own propagandistic *Canada in Flanders*, a commentary on that book and an Arnold Bennett novel. But no mention of (for example) what may be the authoritative academic study, *British Propaganda during the First World War* by M.L. Saunders and Philip M. Taylor (London, Macmillan, 1982) or the work of a fellow-Canadian, Peter Buitenhuis, in *The Great War of Words* (UBC Press, 1987). Both these books argue that Taylor gave far too much credit to Aitken and laud instead C.F.G. Masterman, social historian and Aitken's predecessor. The *Daily Express* also discounted Aitken's contribution, praising Masterman and John Buchan, later Lord Tweedsmuir and Governor General of Canada.

Similarly, the author too quickly retails the story that Beaverbrook once "boldly" proclaimed that he ran the *Daily Express* solely for the purpose of propaganda. The source for this judgment is a 1980 book by Hugh Cudlipp, a Fleet Street legend who wound up running the *Mirror* newspapers. But when Cudlipp told the story earlier, in his 1953 *Publish and Be Damned*, the adjective he used then was "roguishly". From my readings about Beaverbrook the press baron, I suspect the second is the more accurate characterization.

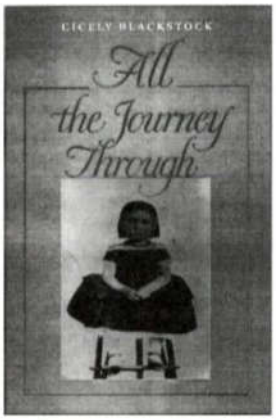
Finally, Marchildon says noted journalist Edward Farrer was hired to head up the Ottawa department of Aitken's weekly propaganda magazine, the *Canadian Century*, and that the magazine, while allowing some dissenting opinion from outsiders, stoutly advocated "the British Empire over continentalism, protectionism over free trade, and British-Canadian nationalism over the home-grown and isolationist varieties prevalent in French-speaking Quebec and Western Canada. Yet Farrer – who headed up no discernible department but wrote a bylined column – consistently took a line that was anti-imperialist, pro-Laurier's navy and "condemned the all-out support for Empire," in the words of his biographer, Carman Cumming, (*Secret Craft*, University of Toronto Press, 1992).

As for what made Aitken tick, let's look at the man himself, no slouch of a writer (even when not getting help from Rudyard Kipling). In *Don't Trust to Luck*, his 1950s revision of *Success* from 1921, Beaverbrook wrote:

> "I once considered the money brain to be not only the shrewdest brain but also the supreme brain. This is no longer my view. The money brain relies, more than I once thought, on experience, rejecting what has failed in the past and repeating what has succeeded."
>
> Extraordinarily simple, isn't it.

Peter Calamai is a student of Victorian-era journalism who listened to Beaverbrook yarns from "Express" survivors in Fleet Street's bars from 1973 to 1979. He lives in Ottawa where he is a freelance writer and communications consultant.

All the Journey Through



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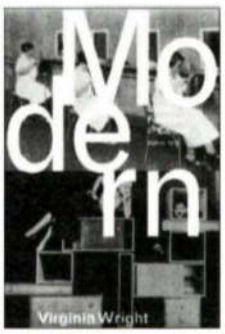

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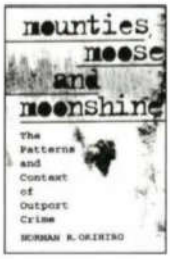

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The Right Stuff

BY GAVIN MURPHY

THE CREAM OF THE CROP
Canadian Aircrew 1939–1945
By Allan D. English.
McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, 1996.
239 pp., illus. $29.95.

Allan English offers a far different account of Canadian aircrew selection during the Second World War than is often popularly portrayed in his groundbreaking book *The Cream of the Crop*.

English, a Royal Military College war studies instructor and former air navigator with the Canadian Forces, strips away the glamorous image of air force service. He forcefully and meticulously explains the real world of selecting and training wartime aircrews; and examines how others were labelled unfit for combat duty.

During the First World War the embryonic Imperial Air Force, which by 1918 was 40 percent Canadian, relied basically on the Royal Navy and British Army to select aircrews. This process was replaced during the Second World War in Canada by a selection system based on medical and psychological criteria. Selection focussed on both physical attributes and aviation training potential. Military doctors and civilian psychologists decided together who were suitable candidates, based on a combined physiological and psychological evaluation. This selection system is still largely in place today.

While Britain embraced the advice of civilian experts to help develop aircrew training procedures, the training of Canadian flyers remained in the hands of the military during war. Ironically, Dr. E. A. Bott, former head of the Psychology Department at the University of Toronto, who initiated aptitude testing with the RCAF, played a key role in developing training methods for the RAF. An efficient training program that included the input of civilian psychologists was adopted by the RCAF near the end of the war and only after unacceptably high wastage rates of Canadian flying personnel.

Lack of Moral Fibre, or "LMF", and other psychological disorders that prevented aviators from combat flying, are considered at length by English. RCAF flyers stationed overseas deemed to suffer from LMF were essentially branded cowards or "waverers". Until 1944 they were liable to RAF procedures for dealing with LMF cases. Rather than go through a lengthy court martial, the RAF generally preferred to remove a flyer's wings, demote him and in some instances drop him from the armed services altogether.

Aviators whose character predisposition led to psychological problems or battle exhaustion was a common occurrence, according to data presented by English. He suggests that Bomber Command, which eventually included a 25 percent complement of RCAF flyers under the RAF's infamous Arthur "Bomber" Harris, lost 23 percent of its annual strength of 80,000 flyers due to psychological disorders.

Widespread pressure at home brought about a "Canadianization" in the methods used for dealing with aircrews suspended from flying duties, including those deemed to suffer from LMF. It was felt that psychological casualties should benefit from Canadian due process and not be subjected to RAF discipline. Spearheaded by Charles "Chubby" Power, Canada's Minister of National Defence for Air, the responsibility for dealing with these cases was initially vested in the minister himself. The Canadian approach recognized that some LMF casualties could play a meaningful role in the war effort in another air force capacity. English says that taking charge for the fate of its overseas aviators allowed Canada to assert independence from Britain and strengthen national pride and political sovereignty. RAF procedures continued to govern Canadian operational squadrons outside the RCAF, especially those in Bomber Command.

Although not stating it emphatically, English appears to support the notion that the process which saw 215,200 Canadians join the air force between 1939–1944 ensured the cream of the crop were recruited. Stringent selecting and training guaranteed this. He presents a hypothetical case, based on wartime statistics, that shows only a fraction of those originally screened by the RCAF made it into battle. Out of a sample group of 10,000 RCAF applications between 1941–43, a total of 338 flyers would be posted overseas. Of these, 40 percent, or 135 flyers, would serve in Bomber Command where only 33 of them would survive unscathed by war or battle stress.

The main body of *The Cream of the*

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Crop is relatively short at 154 pages. Added to this is excellent background data consisting of appendices, 48 pages of notes and a bibliography. It features a varied selection of vintage photographs from the National Defence collection, oddly all placed at the beginning of the book. The author also helpfully provides the reader with an explanation for the numerous abbreviations found throughout the text.

The Cream of the Crop is an insightful and comprehensive look at a key element to the human dimension of modern war. English's book is an important addition to military literature as there is little published on the preparation of Canadian aircrews for combat during the Second World War.

Victory was the objective and this was accomplished, in part, at a cost of 17,101 Canadian airmen who served overseas in the RCAF and RAF. Ultimate success in 1945 resulted in no small measure due to the efforts of Canada's aviators, a dedicated and courageous group who deserved to be called the nation's cream of the crop.

Gavin Murphy is an Ottawa lawyer and writer.

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What's in a Name?

BY LAIRD RANKIN

PLACE NAMES OF ONTARIO
By Alan Rayburn.
University of Toronto Press.
Toronto, Ontario, 1997.
404 pp. $55 hardcover, $21.95 paper.

This book is an alphabetical listing of 2,285 of Ontario's 57,000 "physical and cultural place names" – the top 2,285 Ontario toponyms, so to speak. The entries include all 815 municipalities, those unincorporated places with populations exceeding 75 and a generous selection of miscellany – lakes, rivers, islands, hills, mountains and highways. Toronto is there, of course, and so is Ottawa, naturally, and we are given the straight goods on their origins. Along with the "big names" are the little ones, the obscure and the unusual, places like Plevna, Bastard Township, Dokis, Gurd, or Wilno and a requisite paragraph or two on their histories. Take Gurd for example. Not to be confused with a soundalike verb or fruit, Gurd is perhaps a good example of a now-extinct form of patronage, for this township in the Parry Sound District immortalizes Robert S. Gurd, a Sarnia lawyer, and a personal friend of Thomas Pardee, the Ontario Commissioner of Crown Lands in 1875.

The book may have a monotonous appearance, like that of a digitless telephone directory, but don't be deceived. It certainly lacks the narrative sweep or scope of *Naming Canada*, Alan Rayburn's earlier and first volume, but it boasts equally chatty Gurd-like entries that can be read at one's leisure, in quantity or one at a time. And because Rayburn is a professional geologist who specializes in place names, you know the material is as sound as the Canadian Shield. Given its focus, it is questionable how much appeal this book will have outside Ontario. Would residents in a "have not" province want to read it? They should. Regardless of your Provincial or provincial persuasion, it is worth being read for it offers Canadians a painless way to learn more about our country. That's a good thing, and maybe there are more good things to come, in book form, as Rayburn methodically works his way across the country, province by province, naming names.

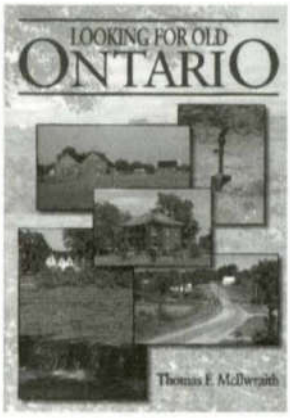
Laird Rankin is Executive Director of Canada's National History Society.

Present into Past

"And the West may be history" declared the *Globe and Mail* headline on an article describing the sudden decline of Liberal support in Western Canada a week before last June's election. *May be* history? May be *history*? Maybe not, as I understand the language. History is not dead and gone, it is vital and enduring. Goodness knows the election proved that, with its references to Meech Lake, the Constitution, and Confederation, and its candidates invoking the spirits of Tommy Douglas, Wilfrid Laurier and even Abraham Lincoln.

When does the present become the past? Take, for example, recent political memoirs: Kim Campbell's ***Time and Chance*** or Bob Rae's ***From Protest to Power***, each of which I heartily recommend as lively accounts that will appeal to more than just political junkies. Both books reminded me that the intensity of passion aroused by any political issue is no sure measure of its continuing significance. Some Canadian debates become so quickly out-dated that they seem almost quaint – free trade or the GST are, in this sense, past history. But as a book-seller, do I put Campbell and Rae in a "current interest" section with books by James Laxer and David Frum, or in "history" along with ***Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Romance of Canada*** and ***Lord Strathcona: a Biography of Donald Alexander Smith***, each of which I picked up in eagerness and eventually put down in disappointment (the former a bit too thin, the latter much too thick).

I once thought of history as everything that happened before I was born, hardly a useful line to draw (although I still cannot bring myself to read the well-reviewed ***Born at the Right Time***, recounting the "history" of the Baby Boom generation). I happily use a Macintosh computer and laser printer, but my mind-set (as an article in this issue of *The Beaver* testifies) is often back in the days of hand-set movable type and flat-bed printing presses.



What a joy it was, therefore, to read ***Looking for Old Ontario***, written by a geographer, not a historian. It views history by looking at the landscape, at the many obvious evidences of human activity. The fences, the straight (and the suddenly not-so-straight) roads, the graveyards, the traces of old mills or abandoned rail lines – all these not only have their own particular stories, they collectively tell of development, progress, decline, change. Especially the buildings – houses, schools, barns, churches, factories – must be looked at (the book has many, many illustrations). An architecture termed "vernacular" – that is, native, grown from immediate need using available material, drawing on familiar styles – is thoughtfully and caringly discussed in its many aspects. (Our own Curiosity House bookstore, a renovated brick-with-gingerbread 1880 house, and our village of Creemore might well have been used as examples.) Read this book and you will never look at the rural landscape – in Ontario, or anywhere else – in the same way again.

I wanted to spend hours with Marsha Boulton's ***Just Another Minute***. It is not as funny as her Leacock Award-winning anecdotes of her life raising sheep, but it is fully as informative and as entertaining as her earlier *Just a Minute*. Here are 46 (I did count them) vignettes of Canadian history, each a tile in the Canadian mosaic. A few were adapted from the Heritage Minutes television and cinema series, but most of them were researched for this collection and all of them are related in Boulton's totally charming style. The book opens with reflections on the beaver as our national symbol (yes, reference is made to this magazine's readers rising in fury last year to silence all suggestion of a name change). It ends with episodes in the life of bush pilot "Punch" Dickins. In between are tales of sports, the arts, politics, legal battles, military encounters, inventors, and much more. Buy it, read it, keep it, give it – and never, never, never again say Canadian history is dull.

Books Cited

Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation. By Doug Owram. University of Toronto Press. 489 pp. $32.95.

From Protest to Power: Personal Reflections on a Life in Power. By Bob Rae. Penguin Books. 352 pp. $32.00.

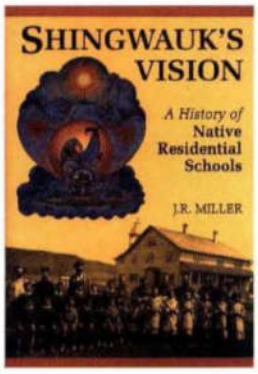
Just Another Minute: More Glimpses of Our Great Canadian Heritage. By Marsha Boulton. Little Brown. 201 pp. $14.95 paper.

Looking for Old Ontario: Two Centuries of Landscape Change. By Thomas F. McIlwraith. University of Toronto Press. 400 pp. $55.00 hardcover; $19.95 paper.

Lord Strathcona: A Biography of Donald Alexander Smith. By Donna McDonald. Dundurn Press. 600 pp. $34.95.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Romance of Canada. By Laurier L. LaPierre. Stoddart. 384 pp. $35.00.

Time and Chance: The Political Memoirs of Canada's First Woman Prime Minister. By Kim Campbell. Seal Books. 392 pp. $9.99 paper.



MILLER WINS PRIZE

James R. Miller, Professor of History at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, is the winner of this year's J.W. Dafoe Foundation Book Prize for his book *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*, published in 1996 by University of Toronto Press. The Dafoe Prize carries a cash award of $5,000. Dr. Miller is also the author of *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*.

BEGBIE WINNER

Forrest Pass, 15, a student at Pender Harbour Secondary School, Pender Harbour, British Columbia, is the winner of this year's Begbie Prize for history, awarded for highest marks on an examination covering nineteenth-and-twentieth-century Canadian history. Pass was awarded a mark of 98. The winner plans to attend Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific and has ambitions to serve in the diplomatic corps.

CAA AWARD

The Canadian Authors Association has announced that Phil Jenkins has won the CAA Lela Common History Book Award for his work *An Acre of Time*, published in 1996. The prize is worth $2,500.

LIVING HISTORY

The Viking site at l'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland, features "living history" this summer. Costumed interpreters will occupy turf houses and serve Norse-style food to visitors. The site will also feature displays of copies of Norse implements and artifacts. The encampment will be maintained until 1 September.

DEFEATED, AGAIN

In March 1905 members of the Yukon Nuggets hockey team set off to challenge the Ottawa Silver Seven for the Stanley Cup, travelling by boat, bicycle, dog-team and train. (For the full story see the December 1986–January 1987 issue of *The Beaver*.)

On that historic occasion Ottawa thrashed the Yukoners 9–2 and 23–2, with star player one-eyed Frank McGee scoring 14 goals in the second game – including eight in succession and three within 90 seconds. The 23 goals scored by Ottawa remain in the record books as the highest score ever recorded for a Stanley Cup Challenge.

This March, in aid of charity, the Dawson City Nuggets made the trek again, using dog-sleds, snowmobiles and aircraft. The result on the scoreboard recalled the events of 1905 as the Nuggets fell to the Ottawa Senators Alumni 18–0 in a game at Kanata, Ontario, on 23 March. Proceeds from the re-march will go to the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, the Canadian Special Olympics and Yukon Minor Hockey.

THE *MATTHEW*

After a hectic voyage, the replica of the fifteenth-century caravel *Matthew*, out of Bristol, arrived at Bonavista, Newfoundland, on the chilly morning of 24 June at the end of a journey across the North Atlantic marking the 500th anniversary of John Cabot's voyage of discovery in 1497.

The Queen and Prince Philip were on hand for the landfall. So were a group of Canadian aboriginals led by Grand Chief Ovide Mercredi who had come to protest the celebration of Cabot's rediscovery of North America.

Historians disagree on the location of Cabot's North American landfall. Indeed, similar celebrations were planned for Cape Breton Island. Others were protesting that Cabot really landed in Maine. This year, however, Newfoundland won the public relations battle and got the lion's share of the publicity.

The "Matthew": across the Atlantic.

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GUEST COLUMN — **BY DONALD B. SMITH**

A Clouded Crystal Ball

Predicting Canada's future ethnic composition can be a tricky business. In the 1930s the severe decline in birth rates of Canadians of British origin, and the virtual cessation of immigration, led many to believe that one day French would become the mother tongue of the majority of Canadians.

Frank Scott, Professor of Constitutional Law at McGill University, argued in *Canada Today* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), a text used in social studies classrooms throughout the 1940s, the French Canadian was, "likely to outnumber the British" by 1971.

Similarly, B.K. Sandwell, Editor of *Saturday Night*, wrote in 1941 in *The Canadian Peoples* (Toronto: Oxford University Press): The French Canadian "is now 30 percent of the total population, and he has a large natural increase rate while the English-speaking element has little or none. If immigration can be kept down, he may ultimately become 35 percent, 40 percent, even – who knows? – 50 percent".

In 1942, Bruce Hutchison's *The Unknown Country* (New York: Coward-McCann) won the Governor General's Award for non-fiction. The celebrated journalist wrote in the first Canadian printing of the book (Toronto: Longmans, Green & Co., 1943): "The 60,000 Frenchmen conquered by Wolfe have grown to more than 3,000,000, about a third of the Canadian nation and, at the present rate of fertility, will some day be the largest part."

Commentators in French Quebec also made projections. Maurice Séguin, a nationalist history professor at the Université de Montréal notes in the issue of *L'Action Nationale* for December 1946: "*Les Britanniques nord-américains ne conserveront pas toujours leur superiorité numérique*" ("The British North Americans will not always maintain their numerical superiority"). As late as 1947, Paul Sauriol, a journalist at *Le Devoir*, the nationalist Montreal daily, still foresaw the day when French-speaking Canadians would constitute the largest linguistic group in Canada (editorial, *Le Devoir*, 7 octobre 1947).

The projected French-speaking majority in Canada did not materialize. Few foresaw the extent of the baby boom to follow the war; nor did they anticipate the large numbers of immigrants to arrive in Canada – the vast majority of whom entered the English-speaking, not the French-speaking community. The absence of French-language school rights outside of Quebec led to high rates of assimilation among French-speaking minorities in the Western provinces, parts of Ontario, and in Atlantic Canada (with the exception of New Brunswick). Finally in the 1950s and early 1960s Quebec's birth rate greatly declined. What seemed likely to happen in the early and mid-1940s never occurred.

Donald B. Smith is Professor of History at the University of Calgary.

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The Great Manitoba Flood of 1882

In the June/July 1997 issue Christopher Dafoe recounts past Manitoba floods and contrasts them nicely with this year's devastating deluge. The flood of 1882 was recalled in a brief quote from the *Manitoba Free Press*.

My grandfather, F.W. Pinkess, arrived in the year 1882 and during the mid-1930s wrote a series of articles for the *Rocanville Record* recounting pioneer experiences in the Great Homeland. Here are a few excerpts describing the flood of 1882 when he arrived in Winnipeg:

"A rapid thaw ensued, the Red River overflowed and flooded the extensive country known as the Red River Valley. Lake Manitoba backed up. At Portage, the land north from McDonald was under water. The Assiniboine rose in a similar manner to the Red. At the Metis' settlement of Baie St. Paul only the upper storeys of houses were visible. South of Brandon Hills many portions of the country were submerged, washouts and the bridges down held up railroad traffic ...

"At this time settlers were pouring into Winnipeg at the rate of one thousand a day and could not get out. The lower part of the city was under water, and with the thaw, mud galore; wagons on Main Street down to the axles ...

"I visited the large Hudson's Bay store and warehouse. In their cellarage there was a long vista of low shelving, stacked seven or eight feet high with tanned buffalo robes. I purchased a couple of buffalo cowskin robes at fifteen dollars apiece. They served us well when we slept on the deck of the *Marquette* on our trip of six days up the river to Brandon. Of course the river was in full flood and going up stream we could make but slow progress, many places we left the river course entirely, sailing over the prairie with our flat bottomed craft."

Further on he says, "at last we arrived at Brandon ... the main town site was high and dry, an ideal location, but the flats were under water ... a snowstorm in Winnipeg on the 24th of May. On the same day in Brandon a foot of snow fell with a high wind. A genuine blizzard and ... we drove down the tent pegs good and tight to withstand the flow. 1882 is historically known as the year of the great flood and the emigration rush ... it would be well to indicate the cause of the unusual flood. During the winter there had been a tremendous heavy snowfall, roads blocked, trains held up, etc. The spring was one of the latest on record. Very little grain was seen until the end of May, lands being too soggy. But incidentally Manitoba had an early harvest, the spring being late and the sun strong."

Much of his discourse describes the other trials and tribulations – interjected with comical anecdotes – of typical pioneer days in Western Canada.

G.F. Pinkess,
Sioux Lookout, ON.

The "*White Horse*" *Star*

I am a researcher for the *Whitehorse Star*, a daily newspaper in Whitehorse, Yukon. The year 2000 will be the 100th anniversary of the *Star*'s existence and to mark the occasion I am researching the newspaper's history. For this reason I am appealing to readers of *The Beaver* for assistance.

Although we have a microfilm record of the *Star* which dates back to 1901, the first 24 issues (published in 1900 from a tent on Main Street) are missing. As you can imagine, we would very much like to have these first issues for research and historical purposes.

Volume 1 Number 1 of the "*White Horse*" *Star* was published on 18 July 1900. The 23 issues which followed were printed weekly, half-tabloid size, eight pages in length.

If anyone has access to any "*White Horse*" *Star* dated 1900, we would appreciate hearing from them.

Paul Erlam
#4-1346 West 11th Avenue,
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Francis Roy Brown Remembered

I read with interest your story in the February/March issue of *The Beaver* of the two Roy Browns.

I first met Francis Roy Brown when I was stationed at Stevenson Field in Winnipeg in 1942 and, as mentioned in your story, the first words he said to me were, "I am not the Roy Brown who shot down von Richthofen". Roy was test pilot for MacDonald Brothers Aircraft at that time and I was on the R.C.A.F. quality control team (A.I.D.), attached to the Mid-West Aircraft Co. During the Second World War, MacDonald Brothers Aircraft were producing the Canadian version of the Avro Anson aircraft, the Mk 5, and Roy became so familiar with this type that he was known as "Anson Jockey Brown". The Company that I was working with was mainly involved in overhauling Tiger Moth aircraft and Roy was our test pilot as well. As I was a lowly airman at the time, my allowance for flying in Service aircraft was 75¢ per day, regardless of the number of aircraft or trips flown. Roy had quite a sense of humour and before we took off on a test flight, he would usually say to me, "Well Sergeant, here goes another six bits". Roy's salary at that time, in addition to what he received from MacDonald Brothers (I was told this was $1,000 per month) was $25 per flight on each Tiger Moth from Mid-West. Apart from the pay discrepancy I enjoyed flying with this pilot and he was well liked by all who knew him. It's a sad fact of life that you don't really get to know a person until sometimes it is too late, and I was very pleased, but not really surprised, to learn from your article that Francis Roy Brown was a "hero" in his own right and a very worthy contributor to our history of Canadian aviation. Thank you again for a very-well written and enlightening article.

H.J. Hoare,
Duncan, BC.

The Warm Parts

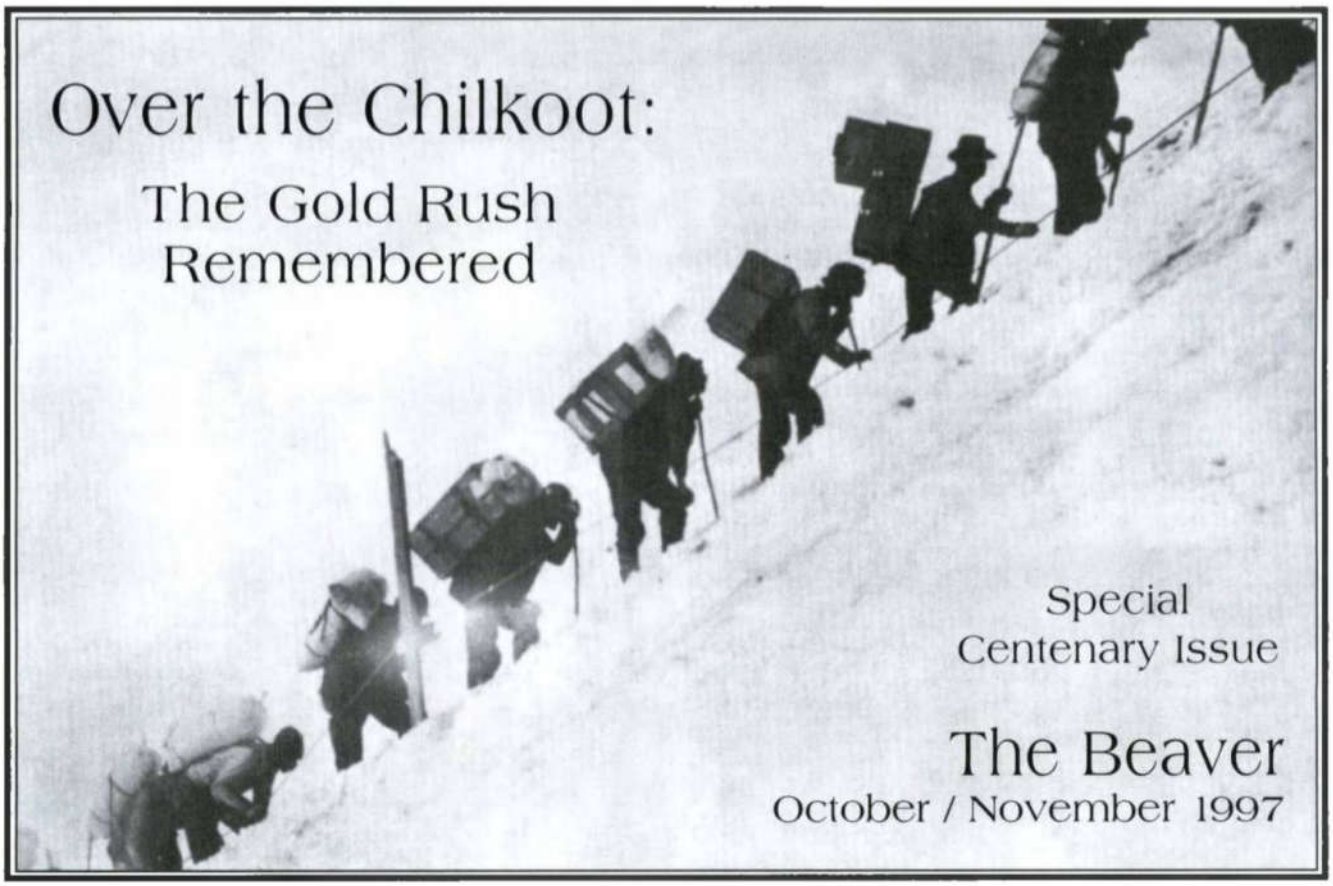
I have just read Christopher Moore's delightful piece, "Helms-Burton meet Godfrey-Milliken" in the February/March issue of *The Beaver*.

On the strength of it and the chuckles it provoked, I hereby declare myself a subscriber, cheque enclosed.

I particularly enjoyed the quotation from a Loyalist descendant anxious to partake in the Godfrey-Milliken land rush: "Please forward to me as much of the U.S.A. as possible (I like the warm parts best)."

What a great bunch we Canadians are.

Marion H. Lepkin,
Winnipeg, MB.



Christopher Moore

By Word of Mouth

Fifteen years ago, a friend asked Toronto lawyer Christine Kates to help do some interviews with a judge. Today Kates is still a lawyer, but she is also Canada's leading oral historian of the legal profession. She had done scores of in-depth interviews with judges, lawyers, court officials, police, and others about their places in the history of the Canadian justice system, and she manages a collection of several hundred taped legal history interviews.

Aubrey Kerr, a retired petroleum geologist in Calgary, fills a similar role as the oral historian of Alberta's oil industry. "I was there," when Leduc #1 came in in 1947, he says. In 1980, Kerr founded the Petroleum Industry Oral History Project to record the voices of others who "were there" as the oil patch grew and prospered. Today Kerr is the author of four books on the subject, and his 400 interviews are preserved for posterity in the Glenbow Museum and Archives. "A lot of those people are dead now," says Kerr, "I have got them on tape."

I had been interested in oral historians and what they do for years. But beyond an admiration for Barry Broadfoot's books, I had no special experience of their craft until I was asked in 1993 to write a history of the Ontario legal profession. Then, looking for material to flesh out the institutional records of the profession, I went to look at the oral history collection that Kates supervises for a Toronto-based organization called the Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History. Frankly, I expected not much more than retired lawyers yarning on about the old days.

I soon learned differently. The typed and indexed transcripts I found myself consulting were long, carefully structured interviews, and a gold mine of information and opinion about the legal profession. They not only fleshed out the institutional record with wonderfully quotable opinions, but also raised issues and pointed to motives in ways simply unavailable from the written record. I gratefully plundered them for the book I eventually wrote. And the experience encouraged me to look deeper into the state of oral history in Canada today. Who is collecting oral testimony to Canadian history these days? Who is making use of the material that already exists? A few conversations soon evoked the old Dickensian paradox. These are the best of times and the worst for oral history.

Tate Gallery, London

"The Boyhood of Raleigh" by J.E. Millais.

Evidence that times are terrible comes easily from a survey of the institutions that once collected most of oral history testimony gathered in Canada. In the 1970s, the British Columbia Archives, like many other public archives, staffed an oral history department, made itself a repository for oral historians throughout the province, and published its material in a polished and popular journal, *Sound Heritage*. "I think we had the best and, except for the National Archives, the biggest program in the country," says Allen Specht, who worked there in the 1970s and 1980s. But all that was phased out in the 1990s, and the story was the same at archives across the country. "There was a golden age of archival acquiring in the oral history field," says Wilma MacDonald, who works at the National Archives of Canada, "but archives have withdrawn from the field."

Partly it was the familiar story of government cutbacks. As public archives were pushed back to their core function as managers of public records, they reduced the general historical collecting, including oral history collecting, they had done. But the mindset of archivists was changing, too. "Archivists and historians were once one and the same," says MacDonald, but as archivists developed their own professional identity, they became more determined that their role was to preserve and manage collections, not to create them. "Today an archivist might actually be discouraged from doing oral history," says MacDonald. The oral-history courses that originally attracted her to the University of British Columbia's Archival Studies program are no longer offered, and her work for the National Archives for the last 10 years has been managing written records.

The retreat of the archives put an end to some of the most ambitious oral-history collecting (and publishing) projects around the country. It also caused a crisis in the Canadian Oral History Association, (or COHA), most of whose leading members were archivists in the very institutions that were abandoning the field. It was not, however, the end of oral history – or even of COHA. The retreat of large, well-funded public institutions left the field to a less visible, more eclectic set of collectors, supported by historical societies, professions (like the lawyers), *caisses populaires*, labour unions, story-tellers' collectives, corporations, and other clients. By adapting to its new circumstances, COHA hopes to help a more diverse constituency build its own golden age of oral history.

For historian James Morrison of St. Mary's University in Halifax, the process of oral history is sometimes as important as the product. He speaks of the valorization process when communities, whose experience "is not the kind of thing that gets into the archives," gain the chance to record what has been important to them. "Often we address things we think we are about to lose," reflects Morrison. "People begin to see there are only a few seniors who remember what the community was like before the school closed or the church." The interviewing that results often helps connect the generations, he finds, as younger people discover meaning in their elders' memories.

Morrison's experience of oral history ranges widely. Researching a doctoral dissertation in West African history a quarter-century ago, he found orally-preserved "memories of memories" could take him back to the sixteenth century, because there was a "pre-literate" society which relied on oral tradition as its only repository. Today, when he is not doing oral history workshops around Nova Scotia, he's working on a book about oral history and oral tradition in Southeast Asia.

Ronald Labelle, however, cautions against excessive expectations. A folklorist with the Moncton, New Brunswick Centre d'etudes acadiennes, he knows the rich collection of Acadian oral history. But, he says, "if you expect 'Evangeline' and testimony about the deportation in 1755, you will be disappointed." In Acadia, "the oral memory is centred on people building communities, not on the ancestors." Labelle notes, however, the pioneering work of Yvan Cormier, who decided in the 1950s to interview centenarians of northern New Brunswick whose memories went back to the 1860s.

Both Labelle and Morrison feel the old question "Is oral history real history?" is fading away. Historian Morrison regrets his own discipline remains "a last bastion" of doubters wedded to written documents, but Labelle finds historians who are interested in social history and work on twentieth-century subjects now use oral sources readily. Labelle himself learned interviewing techniques from his training in ethnology and folklore, fields for which the interview is the basic source. He suspects that interviewers without that training sometimes miss vital clues about the cultural context of the people they interviewed. And Kerr, from a different perspective, emphasizes the specialized knowledge that he and Kates have brought to their projects. "You have to know what you are going to talk about, and what the second question will be. You can't just say 'Tell me all you know.' "

Oral history has its own controversies. The purist tradition, which originated in Britain and which appeals to many archivists, insists the tape itself is "the final document", and the centre of all oral-history work. A more populist, publication-oriented tradition, particularly strong in the United States, assumes that an interview is really only useful when it has been written down, edited, published. Both traditions have had their adherents in Canada. Clearly the tape (or videotape) is a precious thing and worth careful preservation, but oral history needs to find an audience, too. Labelle observes that when tapes are untranscribed, unindexed, and undescribed, few people will listen to "fifty hours of tape" just in case it relates to their own interest. Not all oral histories merit commercial publication, but the end of archives-based publication programs means too many oral histories remain unknown treasures.

For anyone with the impulse to start recording oral histories themselves, James Morrison has a few bits of advice. Plug into the networks, he urges. Morrison believes oral historians should always develop contacts with an archives, so precious tapes do not end up "languishing under the bed." In any case, he says, an interview becomes a conversation, and an interviewee will often pull out documents that also deserve proper preservation. And get in touch with other interviewers, he suggests. COHA has published a *Guide to Oral History in Canada* and the British Columbia Archives has a well-regarded handbook. They not only give how-to tips, but introduce local interviewers to similar projects around the country. COHA, its newsletters, and its journal, *Oral History Forum d'histoire orale*, perform the same function, and COHA welcome memberships from anyone interested in oral history. (Labelle, who edits the journal, says it may begin publishing more interviews, now that national conferences and other outlets for oral history have become rare.)

Whatever its form, whatever its audience, oral history's greatest strength is the unshakable commitment many people have for the heritage of their own communities, neighbours, and forebears. Wilma MacDonald and James Morrison are both "professionals" in the field, yet each cherishes – for personal as well as documentary reasons – interviews they conducted in the early 1980s with parents and relatives who are now deceased.

"It goes in so many directions," says Christine Kates. "Oral historians do so many different things."

Guides and handbooks mentioned can be found in most archives and major libraries, or through COHA, at P.O. Box 2064, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5W3. The COHA Guide to Oral History Sources in Canada is Volume 15 of "Oral History Forum", published in 1993. Aubrey Kerr's self-published works on oil-patch history are also available through Domillo Technical Books, 815 Eighth Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 3P2 (403) 264-7411.

ON THE SIDEWALKS OF OLD MONTREAL

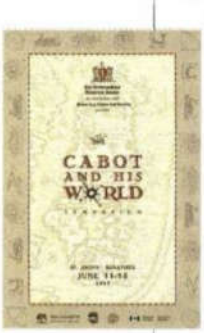
During the Montreal flood of 1886 floating wooden sidewalks made handy rafts, as we see in the background of this photograph taken at the corner of Craig and Bleury streets where the firm of Summerhayes and Walford kept a photographic studio for many years in the late nineteenth century.

Dr. Wallace F. Walford of Perth, Ontario, who sent us the picture, is the grandson of Alfred Graham Walford, who ran the photographic studio with his brother-in-law Robert Summerhayes, eventually selling the business to the ubiquitous firm of Notman and Sons.

Dr. Walford writes that "the man wearing the bowler hat in the foreground is Dad's brother, Fred Walford." The man with the pipe remains unidentified. The floods of 1886 and 1887, the worst in the city's history, were caused by ice jams on the river which piled up against St. Helen's Island, causing the water to inundate half of Montreal as well as Longueuil on the South shore. Flood-gates and dikes were constructed after the flood of 1887 to prevent a return of the flood waters in future years.

THE SOCIETY

Cabot's World



Cabot and His World was the name of a symposium organized by the Newfoundland Historical Society to recognize the 500th anniversary of John Cabot's North American landfall. It was held from June 12 to 16, 1997. The five-day event began in St. John's and then moved to Bonavista, the place which Newfoundlanders have long accepted as the location of Cabot's landfall on June 24, 1497.

The keynote address was given by Colin Mudie, from England, the naval architect who researched and designed the replica of the *Matthew* which arrived in Bonavista on June 24 and was met by Her Majesty The Queen.

The program also included a spirited debate on the location of Cabot's landfall. Was it Bonvasita, Cape Breton, or elsewhere? There were excellent, and moving, presentations by aboriginal representatives about Newfoundland and Labrador before, and after, European arrival. In total, twenty-one papers were presented that expressed a variety of viewpoints on such topics as the English context of the Cabot voyages and the growth of the European fishery in Newfoundland that stimulated these voyages. A slightly shorter version of the St. John's program was presented in Bonavista with the help of the Bonavista Historical Society.

Members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Genealogical Society offered genealogical workshops on family links between Newfoundland and Labrador and England's West Country.

In every respect the symposium was a success. It was well attended and well organized. The content was balanced. Media coverage was generous.

Canada's National History Society was one of three major sponsors of the event. The other two were the Department of Canadian Heritage and Villa Charities, Toronto.

Directors Re-elected

Joseph E. Martin

Desmond Morton

Paul-André Linteau

Joseph E. Martin, of Toronto, and Desmond Morton and Paul-André Linteau, of Montreal, have been re-elected to the Board of the Society for a final three-year term.

Joe Martin is a former Managing Partner of the Deloitte & Touche Consulting Group. Desmond Morton is the Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada. Paul-André Linteau is a Professor of History at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

Changes in Command

Rolph Huband, of Oakville, On., has stepped down as Chairman of the Board of the Society, and Publisher of *The Beaver* magazine, dual positions he has occupied, on a volunteer basis, since 1994. It was in that year, thanks to his vision, initiative and leadership that the Society was established. Mr. Huband is a former Vice-President and Secretary of Hudson's Bay Company. He will continue as a Director of the Society for two more years and has been named Founding Chairman in recognition of his contributions to The Society.

Rolph Huband

The Board elected Joseph E. Martin, of Toronto, to succeed Mr. Huband as Chairman and President effective July 6, 1997.

Effective that same date, the Board appointed Laird Rankin, of Winnipeg, as Executive Director of the Society and Publisher of *The Beaver*. He will serve as the Society's Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Rankin joined the Society in 1994 after nearly 20 years as Executive Director of the Alumni Association of the University of Manitoba and Editor of its publication, the *Alumni Journal*. Until his appointment, Mr. Rankin was in charge of the Society's non-magazine activities.

Laird Rankin

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YANKEE GO HOME? CANADIANS AND ANTI-AMERICANISM
by J.L. Granatstein
In this articulate and opinionated exploration of anti-Americanism in Canada, Granatstein argues that the U.S. has often been too easy a target for our animosities and insecurities and, what began as a fear of U.S. invasion, became a means by which to preserve and protect the power of the Canadian economic and political elite. Publisher's List Price $20; Club Price **$14.** (paper)

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First published in 1971, this engaging book retells the time of armed uprising in Lower Canada in 1837 — the conditions that led to it, the battles, reprisals and the aftermath. This remarkable and sometimes tragic story concludes with the founding of the cornerstone that built Canada, the French-English partnership. 226 pp., index. Publisher's List Price $22.95; Club Price **$17** (paper)

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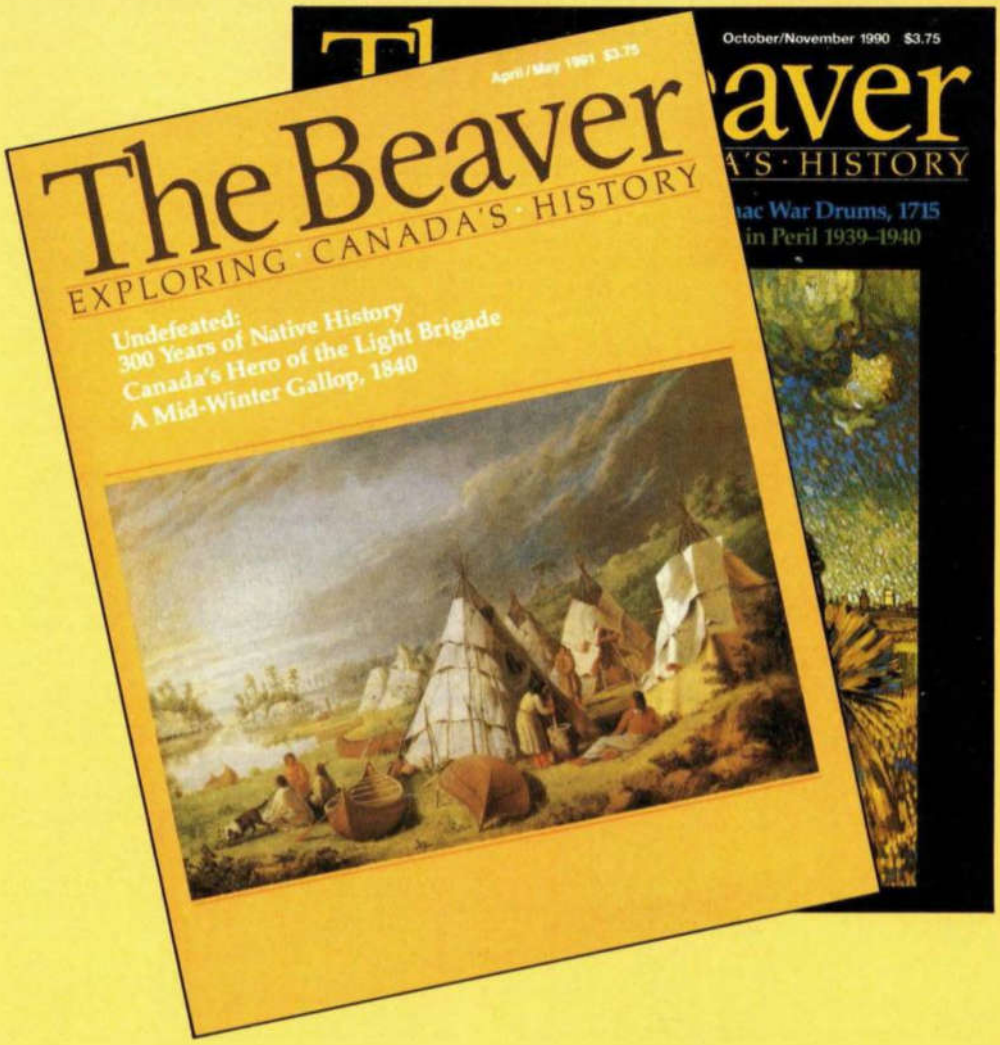

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